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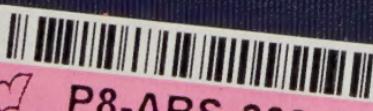
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*Arthur T. Pierson*



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and  
Spiritual Criticism

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# The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

BEING THE SECOND SERIES OF  
**EXETER HALL LECTURES ON THE BIBLE**  
DELIVERED IN LONDON, ENGLAND, IN  
THE MONTHS OF FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL, 1904

By ARTHUR T. PIERSON



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# CONTENTS AND ANALYSIS.

## THE BIBLE AND SPIRITUAL CRITICISM.

### CHAPTER I.

#### SPIRITUAL FACULTIES . . . . . 4

##### Right and Wrong Methods of Bible Study.

The Risks of Thinking.—Blessings perverted to Curses.—“Higher Criticism.”—Obvious drift toward Rationalism.—The Word of God fears nothing from investigation, but rather courts it and commands it: *Acts xviii., II.*

##### Ignorance the Mother of Superstition.

Irreverent Bible Study forfeits a true knowledge, and incurs judicial blindness. *John v., 46-47. Luke xvi., 31.*

##### The Bible Declares Itself the Product of Inspiration.

*2 Timothy iii., 16; 1 Peter i., 10-12; 2 Peter i., 16-21.*

Here we are taught:—

- (1) That all Scripture is inbreathed of God.
- (2) Is not of man's origination or planning.
- (3) Was a problem even to the human writers.
- (4) That they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

##### Conditions of a Reverent Criticism.

1. Acceptance of the Supernatural Element.—“Spiritual” Criticism recognizes this, and
2. The need of a “Spiritual Man” to understand the Book.—Compare *Isaiah xxix., 10, 18; 1 Cor. i., 17 to iii., 21; Matt. xi., 27; xvi., 16, 17; 1 Cor. xiv., 37.*

# Contents and Analysis

The incompetence of man by nature is taught plainly by figures of speech: blindness, deafness, hardness, deadness, darkness, &c.—Bible, like Tabernacle, with inner and outer courts.

## Encouragements to Reverent Study.

1. Humility of spirit.
2. Honesty, intellectual and moral.—Open to light and conviction.
3. Experience: *John vii., 17.*—Obedience the organ of spiritual knowledge.
4. Dependence on God.—Prayer: *Psa. cxix., 18.*
5. Security in Divine Guidance.

## The Inspirer of the Word Becoming the Interpreter of It.

6. Constant and growing confirmation in faith.

## CHAPTER II.

### SPIRITUAL METHODS . . . . . 26

1. Basis of all: firm conviction that *God is the Author* of the Book.

To hold to human authorship is to expect imperfection, to need only mental training to understand, and to thus dishonor the Book and God.

The great question is: “Hath God spoken?”

This is answered—(1) By fulfilled prediction. (2) By high level of teaching.

Compare *Deut. xiii., 1-5; xviii., 15-22; Isaiah xli., 21-29;* and *Jeremiah xxviii., 9.*

If prophets speak in harmony with the events of the history they foretell, and other teaching of the Word, we may accept them as mouthpieces of God.

2. If God is the author, there is but *one* speaker, however many human media. *Heb. i., 1, 2.* There is unity and continuity of utterance, and equal authority in all utterances.

3. We may expect the *first mention* of any subject to forecast the after treatment of it. This is remarkably true.

Examples:—

(1) In the Beginning, God. In all true beginnings, He is the origin.

## Contents and Analysis

- (2) The Spirit of God brooded, etc. Ever since, He has been the Creative Power to bring order out of chaos.
- (3) The Seventh Day. Seven represents here, and always after, completion and rest.
- (4) Serpent more subtle. Satan's leading character henceforth is subtlety.
- (5) Babel—a godless confederacy, with idolatry, monopoly and human glory—it always stands for the same.
- (6) Egypt. When it first appears and always after, a snare and trap to the believer.
- (7) *Gen. xv., 6.* First time "believed," "counted," and "righteousness" are mentioned; henceforth faith is always basis of imputed righteousness.

4. We may expect a *Full* mention of every leading subject vitally connected with holy living. Some one place and generally only one, where God reveals His full mind on any theme.

Hundreds of such instances are found. There is no *repetition*, unless for an obvious purpose. Apparent repetitions prove on careful search to have differentiating elements.

e. g. Opportunity. *Luke xi., xviii.*  
Talents and pounds. *Matt. xxv., Luke xix.*  
Law. *Exodus xx.; Deut. v.*  
Love. *1. Cor. xiii.; 1 John iv.*

### Instances of Full Mention or Exhaustive Treatment.

1. Decalogue. *Exod. xx.*
2. Perfection of Law. *Psalm cxix.*
3. Vicarious Sacrifice. *Isa. liii.*
4. Regeneration. *John iii.*
5. Laws of Kingdom. *Matt. v.-vii.*
6. Godly Repentance. *2 Cor. vii.*
7. God's Love for Lost. *Luke xv.*
8. Sin of Neglect. *Matt. xxv.*
9. Rest of Faith. *Heb. iii., 7-iv., 11.*
10. Christ and Water of Life. *John iv.*
11. Christ as Bread of Life. *John vi.*
12. Message to Troubled. *John xiv.*
13. Intercessory Prayer. *John xvii.*
14. Pentecost. *Acts ii.*
15. Panoply of God. *Eph. vi.*
16. Creation. *Gen. i.*
17. Believer and World. *1 John ii.*

# Contents and Analysis

18. Tongue, Might and Malice of. *Jas.* iii.
19. Righteousness of Faith. *Rom.* iii.
20. God Man. *Heb.* i., ii.
21. Church as Body of Christ. *i Cor.* xii.
22. Resurrection. *i Cor.* xv.
23. Love. *i Cor.* xiii.
24. Perfect Love. *i John* iv.
25. Christian Giving. *2 Cor.* viii., ix.
26. Faith and Unbelief. *Heb.* xi., xii.
27. Divine Chastening. *Heb.* xii.
28. Natural Man. *i Cor.* ii.
29. Israel's Future. *Rom.* xi.
30. Great White Throne. *Rev.* xx.

## CHAPTER III.

### SPIRITUAL ORGANISM . . . . . 50

Bible like an organic body. All parts having mutual relation, necessary to completeness.

Example of *First* mention and *Full* mention, both in one:  
*Exod.* xxv., 1-9. Making of a Sanctuary. All great conditions there indicated for all coming time.

Additional Example of *Illustrative* mention: Job, as example of Disciplinary Trial. Five tests: loss of property, family, health, wifely sympathy, and good name; under the last he broke down—restored by vision of God and collapse of self.

Now call attention to

#### 5. Parallel Mention for (1) Comparison. (2) Contrast. (3) Completeness.

Examples: (1) Comparison.

*Ephes.* v., 19; *Col.* iii., 16. Filled with the Spirit, and with the Word—results the same in individual life and church life.

Parables of Talents and Pounds. Note differences and resemblances.

Old Testament and New Testament units of measure of God's power in believer. *Micah* vii., 15; *Ephes.* i., 19-23. In each case, a passing over the blood, a triumph over foes, a miracle of Power, a divine Leadership, etc.

##### (2) Contrast.

Satan as adversary; Christ as advocate.

Babel or Babylon and New Jerusalem.

# Contents and Analysis

## (3) Completeness.

Vine. *Isaiah* v., *Psalm* lxxx.; *John* xv.

In first, God's disappointment; in second, outward foes to fruitfulness; in last, secret of fertility.

Two Paracletes: Holy Spirit in heart; Christ at the throne.

Good works, wicked works, and *dead* works; the last corresponding to *wild* fruit.

The Bible as a whole like a perfect organism.

(1) All parts correspond mutually. Augustine said,  
“Old Testament latent in the New; New latent  
in the Old.”

(2) All parts mutually necessary. Complete and complement each other, like Leviticus and Hebrews.

(3) Nothing superfluous and nothing lacking; impossible to imagine a more perfect book for the purposes for which designed.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SPIRITUAL STRUCTURE . . . . . 72

*Prov.* viii., 1; *Psa.* xlvi., 12-14; *Isa.* xxviii., 16; *1 Cor.* iii., 9-11; *Eph.* ii., 20-22.

Bible considered as a *Building*—Architectural figure.

A perfect structure involves: BEAUTY OF CONCEPTION, UNITY OF PLAN, HARMONY OF PARTS, GROWTH TOWARDS COMPLETION.

In all these the Word of God shows Perfection.

#### I. Bible Embodies a Divine Idea.

Compare different orders of architecture.—The one dominant idea of the Bible: GOD SAVING MAN. *Eph.* i., 10.

#### II. Hence Unity of Plan. Form includes and excludes.

i. Includes “SEVEN PILLARS”: Man’s Creation and Fall—Prophecy to inspire hope—Sacrifice to train Faith—Gospels to present Redeemer—Pentecost to make Truth effectual—Church to test and prove Grace—Apocalypse to reveal final goal. Here are all factors supplied; and in their necessary order.

## Contents and Analysis

2. Excludes all that is not germane to Redemption; mere scientific information, secular history, rhetorical effect, &c.

The plan of the Bible explains what is and is *not* there.

### III. Harmony of Parts. "Fifty framed together."

1. Subordination of all else to main idea and purpose.—Some truths very prominent like pillars: Jachin and Boaz.—Such as God's Righteousness and Love.—Some others like "Towers": Divine attributes.—Others like a central window. *Isa.* liii. Middle chapter of the last 27 [xl.-lxvi.] or TRANSFIGURATION as an event, or TABERNACLE as an object lesson, or PENTECOST as an experience.
2. Solidarity. All parts connected, cemented in one.  
Rev. John Urquhart: "How to read the Bible." I. chapter on unity of Genesis, &c. Phrase 'IN CHRIST' connects whole New Testament. Phrase 'YE IN ME AND I IN YOU' explains whole relation of believer to Christ, standing and state.

Many lesser unities embraced in the greater: compare arches in a building, each with keystone. Certain words are keys to a whole book: "RIGHTEOUSNESS" to Romans; "SEPARATE" to Corinthians; "WALK" to Galatians; "HEAVENLIES" to Ephesians, &c.

LIFE, LIGHT, LOVE. Three Revelations of God, as sum of all being, of all intellectual truth, and of all moral beauty.

### Hence Indestructible. Luther's Text, *Psa.* cxix., 89.

Word of God essentially based in Heaven, and rises far beyond reach of human assault.—Satan may destroy men's *Faith* in it but cannot touch its true *Life*.

## CHAPTER V.

### SPIRITUAL PROGRESS . . . . . 93

In a Building, part is added to part in orderly progress.

B. W. NEWTON, on "STRUCTURAL METHOD" of Study: Note *first* and *last* mention, and trace what lies between on same subject.

- 1 First and Last mention often indicate what is between.
- 2 Intermediate matter is found fitly joined together.

## Contents and Analysis

- 3 There is order and progress, regular consecutive additions, etc.
- 4 This is true, although canonical order is not order of production.

The form of a PYRAMID best illustrates Bible Structure. The capstone is itself a little pyramid; there can be but one headstone, and all the courses between cornerstone and capstone must be in line with both, etc. *Eph.* i., 20, 21; *Zech.* iv., 7; *1 Pet.* ii., 6. 7.

“Progress of Doctrine” may be illustrated:—

- I. SINGLE VERSES. ¶ *Gal.* v., 22, 23. Here are nine graces—first three appear to look Godward, the next three manward, and the last three selfward.

*Titus* ii., 11-13. Here are the three forms of salvation—the instantaneous, progressive, and final. Also whole of New Testament suggested—“Grace of God,” etc., *Gospels* and *Acts*. “Teaching us,” etc., *Epistles*. “Looking for that blessed Hope,” *Revelation*.

- II. PARAGRAPHS. ¶ *2 Peter* i., 5-8. “Faith, Virtue, etc.” Here the growth is regular: Faith—the childhood; Virtue—Christian manhood, manly knowledge, self-control in pleasure and pain, maturity of Godliness, and then influence in the spheres of church and world.

*Rev.* xxii., 3, 5. From entire banishment of sin to the glorious reign of Saints, seven successive stages.

- III. CHAPTERS, ETC. *Matt.* vi.-viii. Character and influence; Conduct and Motive; Destiny.

*John* xiv., 1-27. Four antidotes to Trouble—Faith in God—in Christ—in Immortality, and in Indwelling Spirit.

*John* xvii. Separation from world, Sanctification by Truth, Unity, Glory. Each of these prepares for what follows.

*Rev.* ii.-iii. Rewards to the Seven Churches. These follow historic order from Eden to Solomon’s reign.

- IV. WHOLE BOOK. *John* i., 4; xx., 31. Development of Idea, *Eternal Life*.

*Acts* i., 8. Progress from Judea to Samaria, Rome, Greece.

- V. GROUPS OF BOOKS. Examine progressive order of *Christ’s miracles*, particularly three of raising the dead.

Christ’s teachings as to *Prayer*, from *Matt.* vi., 6, to *John* xvi., 24-26. There are ten progressive lessons.

# Contents and Analysis

Typical events in *Life of Christ* follow exact order of Epistles from *Romans* to *Thessalonians*:—Death, Burial, and Resurrection—Inbreathing of Spirit—Forty Days' Walk in the Spirit—Ascension—Compensating Joy—Session at Right Hand of God, and Second Coming; and yet the last of these Epistles were the *first* written.

It seems that He who inspired the Word, ordered the historic arrangement of the Canon, controlling by His Providence the formation of the Bible as we have it.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SPIRITUAL PROGRESS.—Continued . . . . . 116

*1 Kings vi., 7.* All parts fit to structure, each in place and in its order.

I. **Old Testament.**—Three main divisions. Historical Books, 17; Poetical, 5; Prophetical, 17. First and last sub-divided into 5 major and 12 minor books, in each case.

The Progress is obvious: Genesis, the Beginning of Man and of Sin; Exodus, the Separation to God; Leviticus, Service and Fellowship; Numbers, Organization and Pilgrimage; Deuteronomy, Rehearsal of the Law; Joshua, Entrance and Occupation; Judges, Decline and Failure; then the six books of the Monarchy displacing Theocracy, and ending in division and captivity; then three books about the Captives and the return, the last exhibiting Providence of God in National History, and preparing for

Job, first of the *poetical* group, which shows Providence in Individual History. Then Psalms—the Believer speaking to God; then three books showing consecutively the World's Verdict (the outcome of its highest wisdom); the World's Vanity, to him who seeks in it satisfaction; and the World's Enmity, alluring the believer to forsake the Lord.

Then come the seventeen Prophetical Books; the five major prophecies and the twelve minor. Isaiah begins with Messiah as Servant of Jehovah and Suffering Saviour of man; and Daniel ends this group, with Christ as Sovereign of the world and Victor over all foes.

There is a curious parallel between the Old and New Testament history. In the New, there is a New Beginning in the Second Man; a New Separation—the Ecclesia, or Church; a New Service and Fellowship, Organization and Pilgrimage; a New Law of Self-Sacrifice and Dispersion;

# Contents and Analysis

then a New Occupation of the world begun for Christ; a decline and failure, a worldly Kingdom under Constantine, ending in division and dark ages of captivity, then a new Restoration (Reformation), etc. The coincidence is most striking.

**II. New Testament** shows similar progress: Matthew deals with the Messiah King, and addresses the Hebrew; Mark with the mighty Worker, and addresses particularly the Roman; Luke with the Perfect Man and addresses the Greek; and John fulfills a special mission after declension had begun, and presents the perfect Deity of Christ. In Acts, Christ by the Spirit continues to do and teach; and in the Epistles, what He first taught in the *germ*, is expanded into fulness, and what He could not say because disciples could not bear it, was by the Spirit taught by epistle writers, when by His illumination they could bear it. Revelation is the manifest keystone not only to the New Testament but to the whole of the Word of God. We have followed the perimeter of a golden ring, and come back in Revelation to what was begun with in Genesis.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SPIRITUAL PROGRESS.—Continued . . . . 140

**Progress of Doctrine as Seen in the Entire Bible.** Marked feature in the New Testament. Positions of Writings of John. Up to about 65 A.D. the Church preserves primitive order. In one year there was a rapid decline. After about year 70 no new inspired addition until after twenty-five years, then John's Gospel and Revelation. John's writings intended to meet the period of declension. Hence what he omits and emphasizes.

**III. As to Whole Bible.**—Note marked instances of Progressive Teaching:

1. **REWARDS.**—Emphasis in Old Testament on Temporal good; in New on Eternal. Prosperity the blessing of Old, adversity of New.
2. **LAW.**—In Old preparing for, and introducing Dispensation of *Grace*.
3. **DISPENSATIONS.**—Seven definite Periods of Divine Dealing with the Race. Each has seven successive features: New Revelation, Declension, Union of Godly and Worldly,

# Contents and Analysis

Worldly Civilization, Parallel Growth of Good and Evil,  
Apostasy, Judgment.

4. **LEGISLATION.**—Covenant, including family and state, based on sacrifice, ratified in worship, involving consecration of time, tithes, first-born, and self.
5. **SABBATIC LAW.**—In Eden; then Rest from Toil, Festal Rest in Sabbath System, embracing seventh day, week, month, year, seventh seven of years, &c. Then a Transition Sabbath (*Isaiah lviii.*) of Rest from Self-Absorption; then in New Testament Rest in Worship, in Resurrection Power, and Holy Spirit Peace (*Heb. iii., 7—iv., 11*).
6. **IDEA OF GOD.**—God of Nature, in His Works, then in His Word, then in His Son, and finally in His Spirit—the last the highest because an inward indwelling (*John xiv., 23*).
7. **TEMPLE OF GOD.**—First, the Universe; then the Tabernacle built by Moses, &c.; then the Believer; and finally the New City of God.
8. **SATAN.**—As a Liar, Accuser (*Job*), Hinderer (*Zech. iii., 1*), Tempter (*Matt. iv.*), Sifter (*Luke xxii.*), Seducer (*Acts v.*), Adversary (*Rev. xx.*). Compare *Eph. vi., 10—17*. The Full armor, each piece fitted to meet Him in these successive characters.
9. **CHRIST AS SECOND MAN, LAST ADAM.**—Compare *Gen. iii., 15; 2 Sam. vii., Psa. viii., Isa. liii., Rom. v., 1 Cor. xv., Ephes. v., and Coloss. iii., Heb. ii., Rev. xxi., xxii.* Steady Progress, the Seed of the Woman, Monarch of Man, Lord of Creation, Spiritual Father, Saviour of those who die without voluntary sin, like infants; giver of Resurrection and so Lord of Death and the Devil.
10. **LAMB OF GOD.**—This is one of the grand lines of truth that run through and unite both Testaments. Again there are ten marked steps of progress, every new one distinctly marking an advance (*Gen. iv. 4, xxii.; Exod. xii.; Lev. xvi.; Isa. liii.; John i., 29—33; Acts viii.; 1 Pet. i., 18—21; Rev. v., xxi., xxii.*). Following this development, we see first the simple idea of a Lamb offered and accepted; then a God-provided Lamb; a slain Lamb and sprinkled blood; two Lambs expressing death and life; the Vicarious Suffering Lamb; then John declares Christ to be the Lamb of God; Philip identifies him with *Isaiah's prophecy*; Peter first refers to His Resurrection; and in Revelation we have the final disclosure of the Lion-Lamb, who makes Kings and Priests, and is the centre of Heaven's Life, Light, Worship and Service.

# Contents and Analysis

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SPIRITUAL SYMMETRY . . . . . 162

**A Master Mathematician and Geometer** behind this book; a system of exact arithmetic numbers and geometric forms.

**God in His Works of Nature.**—Mathematical Proportion everywhere.

PLANETARY WORLDS.—Distances, dimensions, periods, orbits, all exactly adjusted. ‘Kepler’s Laws.’

MINERAL WORLD.—Crystallization, exact symmetric forms and angles.

VEGETABLE WORLD.—System of numbers so accurate as to be basis of classification by Linnaeus. Spiral arrangement of leaf-buds, etc.

ANIMAL WORLD.—Mollusca, radiata, vertebrata, etc., muscular, vascular, and nervous system. Geometry: Hexagonal cell and lenses in eye of the dragon fly, web of spider, etc.

COLOR AND SOUND.—Solar Spectrum and musical octave.

All these marks of a mind that counts, weighs, measures and proportions, analyzes and combines with absolute exactness. *Nature a vast clockwork.* Paley.

**God in His Word.**—The same mathematici: i. Four leading numbers and forms, with their combinations, 1, 2, 3, 4;  $3+4=7$ ,  $3\times 4=12$ . Other numbers also show a purpose: 10, 40, 70, 144, 490, 1,000, etc.

Curious Fact.—Where *seven* occurs, usually meant to be sum of *four* and *three*, the distinction being marked by some different features, as in Lord’s Prayer, Seven Petitions—four pertaining to God and three to man. See Seven Parables of Kingdom (Matt. xiii.) and Seven Epistles (Rev. ii., iii.), in both which cases three are different from the other four.

Also Twelve is meant to be multiple of four and three. Compare Watches of the night, four of three hours each; Breastplate, four rows of three each (Exod. xxvii., 16, 17); and Tribal Standards about Tabernacle (Num. ii.).

There is undoubtedly MORAL MEANING in this Numerical System (compare Numbers xv. 34, Leviticus xxvi. 34, 35, &c.). 490 years from Saul to captivity, with 70 Sabbatic years, for neglect of which God exacted 70 years of captivity. Another 490 years also followed from captivity to Christ, then

# Contents and Analysis

70 years from His birth to fall of Jerusalem, showing how numbers pervade history also.

THE DOMINANT GEOMETRICAL FORMS are the triangle or pyramid, square or cube, circle or sphere. Example: *Cube in Holy of Holies, New Jerusalem, etc.*

Possible significance of this Numerical System.—1. Identifies Creator with Author of the Book. 2. Reveals exact mathematical mind; no chance product. 3. Hints a definite plan in History of the Ages. 4. Verifies the Record and the Canon, and may yet be found even to establish human agencies used. 5. Shews a Harmonic Law which unites the whole as the musical key, time, theme and movement do a musical composition.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SPIRITUAL TYPES . . . . . 184

A type is an Anticipative Figure (Rom. v. 14).

Truth taught by figurative forecast. In New Testament several words used to express this: parable, token, example, shadow, order or rank, likeness or similitude, pattern, figure, and allegory. Danger of fanciful interpretations; hence two safeguards needful: (1) The authority of the Word itself in interpreting types (Gal. iv. 24). (2) The clear doctrinal teaching, apart from the type.

Bible full of Types, so interpreted by the Spirit. Examples: Rock in the Desert, Manna, Paschal Lamb, Tabernacle, Veil, etc.

We select a series of them, by which SALVATION FROM ITS START TO FINISH is set forth. Note, as to salvation, the following truths typically taught.

I. ITS STARTING POINT. Deliverance from Judgment (Exod. xii.). God saw the blood and passed over the Hebrew houses—the only condition. To take refuge under atoning blood is absolute safety.

II. ITS BASIS: VICARIOUS SACRIFICE. Two classes of offerings (Levit. i.-vii.). Ill savour and sweet savour. In the first, the life of the *innocent given for the guilty*; in the second, the life of the *ransomed given back to the ransomer*. Here we are taught not only salvation from penalty and guilt, but also a higher Salvation, sanctification unto God.

## Contents and Analysis

III. ITS PRIVILEGES.—Fellowship with God and with one another. Tabernacle with God in midst, and Tribal Standards ranged about (Num. ii.). In Tabernacle—three courts: (1) In outer, Brazen Altar and Laver, signifying TERMS of Communion, Blood Atonement and Regeneration by the Spirit. (2) In Inner, Table Shewbread, Candlestick, Altar of Incense, signifying FORMS of Communion, Offering of Substance, Wilness to God, and Prayer, constituting *service*. (3) In Holiest of all, the Ark and Mercy Seat, signifying IDEAL of Communion in Christ, the Mercy Seat and Mediator, His Obedience and Intercession. PRIVILEGES further set forth in whole system of PRIESTHOOD, particularly in onyx stones on shoulder-pieces of Ephod, and in the Breastplate, and Holy Crown on forehead (Exod. xxviii.), signifying Power, Love and Holiness of Christ as at disposal of believer (Comp. Ephesians i., iii.).

IV. ITS PROGRESS.—Figure of Pilgrimage. Exodus to Entrance. Egypt, the Life of Sin. Canaan, the Life of Rest in God. Stages of Progress represented by various stations on march, particularly Red Sea, Sinai, Kadesh, Jordan.

V. ITS PERILS.—Mainly Backsliding—Returning to Egypt. Idolatry, as at Sinai; Disobedience and Murmuring, as at Massah and Meribah; Unbelief towards God, as at Kadesh; and Compromise with the world, as in Canaan, leading to Captivity and Idolatry (Comp. Ezekiel xxxvi. 16-38).

VI. ITS DUTIES.—Constructing and then compassing the TABERNACLE both as Worshippers and Guards. Compassing JERICHO (Comp. 2 Corinth. x., 3-6). Latter expressing the Work of God and its conditions: following an Unseen Captain, Blowing Gospel Trumpet, Using Spiritual not Carnal Weapons, Awaiting God's Signal, Faith in God's Power, &c. How suggestive of Holy Spirit's Presence. Foolishness of Preaching, Conquest of Faith, &c.

VII. ITS PRESENT REST.—Canaan, intended as a Land of Fertility, Victory over Foes (Caleb and Anakim), Settled Habitation, Pure Worship and Holy Feasts (Comp. Heb. iii., 7—iv., 11, New Testament application.)

VIII. ITS FINAL CONSUMMATION.—New Jerusalem (Rev. xxi., xxii.). (1) CITY OF GOD (a) Let down from God, (b) Having glory of God, (c) Habitation of God, (d) Throne

# Contents and Analysis

of God. (2) CITY OF MAN: (a) Its Walls and foundations, names of Apostles, (b) Its gates, open to every quarter, welcoming all, (c) A city or community of the redeemed—a Bridal City, (d) A bond of brotherhood—holy love and affinity. Here cubic symmetry—perfect manhood; radiant gold and gems—perfect virtue, shining with inner light. Sevenfold perfection as a community (Rev. xxii., 3-5). No Temple, because God is the Temple, and no visible symbols or material forms longer needful when God is spiritually known.

To those who would further study types, we suggest the following: The Rock Smitten, Serpent on Pole, Year of Jubilee, Olive Tree (Rom. xi.), First Fruits, Joshua, Leaven, Honey and Salt, Mercy Seat, Tables of Stone, Pillar of Cloud, etc.

## CHAPTER X.

### SPIRITUAL WISDOM . . . . . 212

(James iii., 17; Prov. i., 22-33; iii., 13-18; viii., ix.)

Bible incomparable in: 1. *Concepts*, or Ideas of Truth.

Theoretical. 2. *Precepts*, or Ideas of Duty. Practical.

These are so related as to be complementary to each other.

To exhibit this, we may take as the *centre* about which to group Bible Teaching and Rules of Life, the conception of

#### The Universe.

I. This is presented to us in a *fourfold* aspect, as double realms: 1. Material and Immortal. 2. Visible and Invisible. 3. Temporal and Eternal. 4. Supreme and Subordinate. Originally all was perfect, revolving about God.

II. SIN entered as a Disturbing Force—a Revolt against God. The Angelic Hierarchy apparently existed in seven ranks, Archangels, Principalities, Powers, Thrones, Dominions, &c. In the Revolt, Satan, probably an Archangel, led a host of evil spirits, still existing in ranks as before (Ephes. vi., 12).

III. MAN was created, innocent. Fell under Satan's Temptations. Created Body, Soul, Spirit—thus allied with Matter, Life and God. After the Fall, the Body became the seat of the *flesh*, the Soul subject to the allurements of the *world*, the Spirit subordinate to the *Devil*.

## Contents and Analysis

IV. REDEMPTION was provided for sinners. The God-Man uniting perfect divinity and humanity, bearing man's *penalty* vicariously, &c. The Holy Spirit regenerating man's nature, supplying a new *element* for the new life, and thus providing for overcoming *power* of sin and delivering from its *presence*, finally banishing it from man's redeemed home.

V. DUTY is the outcome of universal Truth. All claims of Duty centre about these truths and follow from them, naturally and necessarily.

1. *Repent, believe, obey.* Sin, abandoned and renounced—a vital bond formed with Christ, as Redeemer, leading to holy obedience.
2. *Submit to God,* return to allegiance and make God's will supreme (Matt. vi., 33).
3. *Love not the world,* which hides Eternal things by the Temporal; *mortify the flesh,* which hinders the Spirit; *resist the Devil,* who opposes God.
4. *Follow Holiness.* Love God with all thy heart, &c. Allow no compromise (Lev. xi., 20–33; Deut. xiv., 19).
5. *Aim at usefulness* (Matt. xvi., 25; John xii., 25). Take up the cross of self abnegation.
6. *Live for eternity,* not Time (1 John ii., 15–17).

Death becomes to a believer the gateway of glory. The Father's House is the Universe. Death is going from earthly to heavenly mansions or abodes.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SPIRITUAL VERDICTS . . . . . 234

Psalm xii., 6. The Word of God subjected to Sevenfold Test of Human Experience—Triumphant in every experimental trial. Verdict alike of friend and foe. Deut. xxxii., 31. Instance teaching about:

I.—CREATION.—Personal Creator. Certain unanswerable facts:

1. Design demands a designer. Especially where provision is made for a future stage of growth —Caterpillar—Butterfly.
2. Natural law demands an administrator. Especially where *exceptions* to its operation exist.—Water and Ice.

## Contents and Analysis

3. Life can only come from life. No spontaneous generation.
4. Moral character must have a moral source.

II. SIN.—Depraved nature. Various confirmations of  
• Bible teaching:

1. Universality. Sin found everywhere.
2. Gravitation toward evil—requires effort to resist.
3. Irrepressible. Examples—Drink, Lust, Crime,  
Lawlessness.

III. JUDGMENT.—Final Assizes of Universe. Confirmatory Facts:

1. Human conscience reflects Great White Throne.
2. All present retribution partial and imperfect.

IV. TWO SPHERES.—Matter and Spirit.

1. Man represents both. Behind body and even  
brain, mysterious force.
2. Life more than its organism. Precedes Organism and determines it.
3. Something that thinks—Harper more than harp  
or harmony.

V. SALVATION.—Embracing penalty of sin borne and power broken.

1. Daily miracle.—Purged conscience. Peace of pardon.
2. Transformed character. God's everlasting sign.  
Isa. lv.

VI. PRAYER.—Positive power to effect results.

1. Great crises of individual and national history turned by prayer.
2. Great enterprises.—George Muller, Hudson Taylor, &c.
3. Daily experience—fulfilled promises.

### Verdicts in Favor of Bible from various impartial sources.

1. Science.—“Blood is Life.” Sanitary Laws of Pentateuch. Agricultural Ant (Prov. vi., 6–8). Hiram of Tyre helping Solomon. Testimony of monuments. Palestine Exploration. Sayce, &c. Future Destruction by Fire (2 Pet. iii.). Composition of air and water. Hydrogen, very combustible; Oxygen, great feeder of combustion.
2. History.—Transforming Power. Isaac Taylor, “Nine Social Evils.” Weak and small beginnings of Christianity, and present outlook. Missions.

## Contents and Analysis

3. Experience of believers—Ruskin, Simeon, Faraday, &c.  
Highest and humblest.
4. Confession of Unbelievers.—Gilbert West and Lord Lytton.  
Great body of testimony.—Herbert Spencer, Robert Ingersoll.

### Conclusions.

Here is the one Book of Books.—Living Book—Book of God—exhibiting one perfect Life, secret of perfect peace, even in death. The one indestructible Book. The one Victorious Book. Never so much read and loved as now. Voltaire threatened to destroy Christianity—his printing-press now issuing Bibles. Every assault only makes Word of God more triumphant. Peter Mackenzie sitting in Voltaire's chair and singing, "Jesus shall reign."

## CHAPTER XII.

### SPIRITUAL VERITIES . . . . . 257

2 Peter, i., 16. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables."

Great difference between the sane and insane—one accepts and acts on *facts*, the other, *fancies*.

Present day marked by unparalleled prevalence of 'cunning fables'—EVOLUTION, fruitful mother of numerous Progeny such as:

A Fable about CREATION. The Universe made itself. All forms and potencies of Life found in matter—takes only *time*, and highest products evolve from lowest.

A Fable about MAN. His mother, a monkey, or more remotely a codfish, or an oyster, a monad or mite; electricity acting on dead, gelatinous matter.

A Fable about the BIBLE, that it marks a stage in literary evolution, and necessarily defective, because on the way to final product.

A Fable about CHRIST. He was the most perfect man *thus far*, but ignorant of much known to modern 'critics'—reflecting errors of His day, &c.—best of teachers yet not infallible, final authority.

Hence a general prevalence of DOUBT and UNCERTAINTY even

## Contents and Analysis

in the Church. Are there any FACTS? any VERITIES, or are all VANITIES? WE BOLDLY STAKE EVERYTHING on the following simple CREED:

1. I BELIEVE THERE IS A GOD. Even many sceptics compelled to rest in this conclusion. Herbert Spencer: "Religious Retrospect and Prospect," Romaines, etc.
2. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS GOD'S BOOK. It has His Seven Seals on it (Rev. v.). Seal of God's Wisdom, power, truth, eternity, righteousness, infinity and love. Prophecy alone sufficient to attest it as Divine. Yet this only one of many forms of evidence.
3. I BELIEVE JESUS CHRIST IS SON OF GOD AND SAVIOUR OF MEN. All His teaching and life consistent with His claims. All prophecy fulfilled in Him, all transforming power radiates from Him. The Living Word and Written Word inseparable. He is forecast in Adam, Isaac, Exodus, Tabernacle, Serpent on Pole, Smitten Rock, &c.
4. I BELIEVE IN SUPERNATURAL WORKING OF GOD. The Resurrection of Christ is as well attested as any other event, and the greater miracle makes all lesser credible. Prayer evinces supernatural working.
5. I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD as source of all new Life, power over Sin and in Service. He alone accounts for the daily miracle of conversion, transformed temper and holy living.
6. I BELIEVE THE CHRISTIAN FAITH alone meets man's highest needs. (a) Salvation from sin; (b) Perfect pattern of holiness; (c) Peace in present life and triumph over death. Atheism and Infidelity leave the dying to despair.

### Final Words.

**SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.** Not only read but study, meditate, compare.

**PRAY IN SECRET.** Communion with God admits of experiment, and so of proof. This is what Chalmers called '*The Portable Evidence*' of Christianity.

**READ STORY OF MISSIONS.** Exhibits present power of the Cross. A new record of God's wonder working. New "Acts of the Apostles."

**TRUST EXPERIMENT.** Argument often sophistical and fallacious. "*Taste and see.*" You may KNOW whom you have BELIEVED.

## Contents and Analysis

**HAVE NO FEAR FOR THE BIBLE.** It is an Indestructible Book. The reason is, God is behind it, and it is inwrought into the highest human experience. The Life of God permeates it and it permeates the life of man.

**LIVE UNTO GOD.** Nothing is at once such a proof to yourself or such a demonstration to others. The answer to all doubt.



# The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

## INTRODUCTORY

ONE of the ruling considerations which led to the acceptance of the invitation to deliver a second series of Lectures, in Exeter Hall, in 1904, was that it was the Centenary year of the British & Foreign Bible Society. It seemed a most fitting time, while these anniversary exercises were giving emphasis to such commemoration and celebration, to call the attention of the public mind to the *contents* of the Word of God, and its intrinsic and unrivalled excellence.

The task which I set before me was much more perplexing and complicated than that of the previous year. The subject chosen was such as was not susceptible of a similar division. In a sense, these twelve lectures constitute one con-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

tinuous address, broken up into fragments; and, partly on this account, with the co-operation of my friend Mr. Putterill, there was published, each week, a synopsis of the preceding lecture; and this was freely distributed to those who entered the Hall, in order that any who had not been present at the previous lecture might thus reach the point at which the lecturer took a new start, as well as recalling that which had been heard, and preserving, without the trouble of taking voluminous notes, the outline of the thought, and the texts of scripture by which the positions were verified. These synopses are reprinted in this book to indicate its contents. The lectures being delivered extemporaneously and reported stenographically, have a colloquial style natural to addresses which have not been written.

There is in the following chapters no appeal to the love of the sensational, nor attempt at any oratorical embellishment or entertainment. The discussion of such a theme is a solemn business, at one of the most serious crises the Church has ever been compelled to face, and all that is attempted is a simple, humble contribution to that great cause, so dear to our Lord Jesus Christ—the defence of the inspiration and integrity of the Holy Scriptures. Those who heard these addresses

## Introductory

manifestly came with a prayerful and serious spirit, not as curiosity seekers, like the Athenians, looking for something new, but hoping to be instructed, informed and inspired by the consideration of the truths that centre in the Word of God. In giving the discussion a permanent form, help has been sought from Almighty God, that the writer may be faithful to the duty laid upon him and not faint under the burden of his responsibility.

## CHAPTER I

### SPIRITUAL FACULTIES

EVERY thoughtful student must at times be appalled by the risks of thinking—for thinking does involve risks. The Mind is a great gift, but the gift may be abused and perverted; and Thought is a magnificent capacity, but it is possible to work disaster and damage. If thought dwells upon wrong themes, or pursues right themes in a wrong method and spirit, profit is forfeited, and injury may ensue—and even judgment from God be incurred. The 119th Psalm, which more than any other passage of the Holy Scriptures presents the blessedness and advantage of a reverent, humble, obedient Bible Study, abounds also in warnings addressed to the proud, the rebellious and the profane. God's Word is an Ark of the Covenant, and the presence of the Shechinah Fire glows in the Word, and God will not have irreverent eyes looking into His Ark, nor irreverent hands handling it. It is possible to do as the Jews did,—search the scriptures, and search them diligently, and yet miss their essential teaching.

## Spiritual Faculties

There were scribes, familiar with the writings of the Old Testament, who yet did not see that its prophecy was fulfilled in the Messiah, and did not discern even the real morality of God's commands. They tithed mint and rue, and annis and cummin, and passed over the weightier matters of judgment, mercy, faith and the love of God; and Christ said of them that they held the key of Knowledge, but neither entered into its temple, themselves, nor suffered others to enter in.

An etching of Retzsch, in illustration of Faust, represents a scene in Goethe's great dramatic poem, in which the demons in the under world are contending for the possession and control of the soul of Faust; and the angels in heaven, intensely interested in the struggle, are represented as picking flowers, and throwing them down upon the heads of the demons: and, as these roses pass through the sulphurous fumes of the abyss, each one of them turns into a burning coal of fire, blasting the demons as it strikes them. There are blessings that leave God's hand like roses of heaven, but, coming into the atmosphere of a disobedient, ungrateful and irreverent heart, are turned into the coals of hell; and so it is possible to pursue even Bible study in such a manner as to make it a curse.

These words suffice to hint the subject and

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

object of this chapter, whose purpose is to discuss the relation of the intellectual powers to spiritual truth.

The phrase, "Higher Criticism," has, in these days, become very obnoxious to orthodox believers, because of the rapid and obvious drift of much so-called critical study away from the foundations of faith. There is a manifest trend in so-called "Higher Criticism" toward the banishment from the Bible of the entire supernatural element,—a trend, rationalistic in spirit and infidel in tendency. Yet we must be very careful that we do not take an attitude against Biblical criticism as such; for "criticism" simply means the careful and intelligent and scholarly study of a subject. *Higher* Criticism is not necessarily *hyper*criticism, which pursues study in a captious spirit, looking for blemishes, and magnifying and exaggerating them where they seem to exist. True criticism is careful and intelligent examination, and we are bound to conduct critical studies of the Word of God,—and the more critical the better. Let us remember that the Word of God does not fear any exposure from light; nay, more, it courts and commands searching investigation. If the Bible is the Book of God's truth, the God of Truth is behind it; and Truth's kingdom is not divided,

## Spiritual Faculties

—otherwise it could not stand; and there is no declared truth in the Bible that can possibly collide with any truth that is declared or exhibited by God, outside of the Bible. His Book of Nature, His Book of Providence and His Book of Grace are in the same library, and from the same Author.

We are told of a Brahmin who, when he saw through the lenses of his microscope that the sacred water of the Ganges was full of filth and germs of disease, dashed the lenses of his microscope to pieces, because he could not stand the disclosure and exposure of his errors and superstitions. But it would be a strange kind of believer that ran away with his Bible into the dark corners of the cave of traditionalism and superstition, because he feared that the search light of Truth might expose blemishes in his sacred Book. No. Locke says: "To abandon the use of Reason, in matters of Revelation, is like putting out the eyes, in order to use a telescope." The Bible is God's precious gem, and, like any other gem, its imprisoned flames only burn brighter in the intensest light. The most brilliant sunshine must be concentrated and converged on the Word of God, if we are to know what an infinite treasure it is. False priests and false prophets have in all ages been only magicians, practising upon the credulity

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

of the people, and, if we would be God's "more noble" believers, like those of Thessalonica, we shall search the scriptures daily. That word "search" is in the Greek one of peculiar force. It is sometimes applied to the exploration of bays on a coast, by triangulation, when every change in the coast line is discovered and marked. The intensest search into what the Word of God contains is that which is needed, and especially should every minister and teacher of the truth conduct the most critical studies on the Word of God; for, if the physician masters the art of medicine, and the lawyer masters the science of legislation, and the logician, the art of disputation, surely the religious teacher should master, as far as possible, the Book that is the text book of his teaching and his preaching.

While all this is true, much that goes by the name of "Higher" Criticism is rather "lower" criticism. It is not even critical, but most uncritical; not philosophical, but unphilosophical, as is seen when a subjective impression is allowed to guide a man instead of the objective result. It is specially obnoxious when, in the name of Criticism, one arms himself with an axe, and goes into the very sanctuary of God to break down the carved work of His Temple of Faith.

## Spiritual Faculties

There is a right and there is a wrong attitude on this subject. Ignorance is the mother, not indeed of devotion, but of superstition, and we must encourage intelligence, especially in this era of intelligence. But the Bible, while it encourages all manner of investigation, insists upon a right method and spirit in the conduct of investigation. He who does not conduct his Bible study in such spirit, forfeits all blessing in that study, and, as has been intimated, may incur the judgment of God in the infliction of judicial blindness; and the ultimate effect of judicial blindness in the teacher is widespread disaster to those who follow his pernicious ways, as has been already seen in many cases in the Church of Christ.

Notice how our Lord Jesus Christ, in less than fifty words, has indicated the whole trend of modern rationalistic criticism. It is one of the most remarkable forecasts which the Word of God contains. He said: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" (John v: 46, 47.) And He subsequently said: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Luke xvi:31.) Here the exact trend of rationalistic criticism

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

was indicated nearly two thousand years ago; for it began in disputing the authenticity of Moses' writings; then it went on from that to dispute the inspiration of the prophets; then it passed on to question the authenticity and infallibility of the words of Christ; and now it is disputing as to whether He even rose from the dead! Our Lord thus gave us, prophetically, the whole drift of this irreverent criticism, showing where it would begin and where it would end.

There are a few great *principles* that should guide us in the reverent study of the Word of God.

1. In the first place, we must face the fact that the Bible absolutely declares itself to be the product of Divine inspiration.

The Bible does not define inspiration; it defines nothing,—not even God. It gives the materials from which to construct a definition, but it constructs no definition. Yet it indirectly defines, just as an artist indirectly defines a landscape when he puts it on canvas. There are three texts that deserve careful consideration: they supply a kind of key-note to the whole subject of inspiration: II Tim. III: 16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God"—divinely inbreathed. Here the reference seems to be to man's creation. We are told in Genesis II: 7 that "God formed man

## Spiritual Faculties

out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." That is to say, there was a form that was earthly, and there was a breath that was heavenly and divine. There is a similar combination in the Word of God: there is a form that is human,—human letters, language, paragraphs, writers and style; but there is a breath that is Divine. Like that writing on the wall that Belshazzar saw in his palace, it is a man's hand, but the handwriting is God's. Then in I Peter 1: 10-12, and II Peter 1: 16-21, are two of the foremost passages of scripture to throw light on the nature of inspiration.

Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

That is a remarkable collation of testimony from the Word of God itself, and let us notice what it teaches: First, that the scriptures are Divinely inspired, or inbreathed by God with the Spirit of Life. Secondly, that they are not of private interpretation. This word includes *origination*. The idea is that the prophet did not, *out of his own mind or will*, interpret the mysteries of the future; and that their origination as well as interpretation is not of human will. Thirdly, we are distinctly told that these prophecies were not of human planning. They came not by the will or mind of man. When a man is going to do a work, he plans it beforehand. But, when the prophets gave their prophecies, there was no human fore-

## Spiritual Faculties

planning of the prophecy. They were working according to a Divine plan that they themselves did not understand, and hence the prophecy presented even to the prophets an insoluble problem. They searched and enquired diligently to know what they were prophesying, and what manner of time they were indicating when these prophecies were to be fulfilled. It is obvious that this would not accord with that modern theory of inspiration which many of our young men are being taught to accept,—that inspiration under the old covenant was a knowledge of certain great principles of God's moral government, such as that iniquity must be punished, and that Israel must be saved as His witnesses; and that the prophet Isaiah, for instance, from a knowledge of these, was enabled to predict the future of Israel.

Not only were the prophets confronted in their prophecies with a problem that they could not solve, but even the angels themselves desired to look into them, and were not able to penetrate the depths of the abyss of these mysteries; and to the prophets it was specially revealed, we are further told, that they were uttering prophecies not for themselves but for future generations, but that the events of history were to hold the key that should unlock the chambers of prophecy. All

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

this is explained by the fact that they were borne along by the Holy Ghost, like a boat which is swept along by a resistless current.

As to the further conditions of a proper critical study of the Word of God:

In the first place, it is a *divine book*; and, as a divine book, it stands unique and solitary, apart from all other books, separated by a gulf that no bridge can cover or span. A reverent student thinks of the Word of God somewhat as of the God-Man. God must smile in derision at some attempts to philosophise about the God-Man. There never was such a Being before, and never will be again,—One perfectly combining divinity and humanity in Himself. We can only stand appalled before the mystery of His unique personality. So there never was or will be another book that combines the human and divine element as this Book does. When therefore we are told that it must be studied just as other books are, that is exactly what we deny. It must be studied as no other book is, because it constitutes a class by itself, and can be classed with no others.

Hence the term “Spiritual Criticism.” Historical criticism depends upon the events of history; literary criticism depends upon comparative language; textual criticism, upon the keen study of

## Spiritual Faculties

the text and context; philosophical criticism, upon the discernment of a philosophy which pervades the Word of God. Spiritual criticism is different from them all, but, when it qualifies our study, modifies and regulates all the rest.

What is "Spiritual" criticism? It involves (1) the recognition of a spiritual and supernatural element in the book of God; and (2) implies the necessity of the "Spiritual Man" to perceive, discern and apprehend the spiritual element in the book. That is what we mean by "Spiritual Criticism." Let it be repeated, that we may get it properly in mind, for all understanding of what is yet to be considered depends upon the acceptance of this position,—that spiritual criticism is the acknowledgment of a divine, spiritual and supernatural element in the Bible; and of the necessity for such spiritual faculties in those who study it, as to discern this divine, spiritual and supernatural element.

We emphasize this possession of spiritual "senses." Truth demands the verifying faculty. Christ says: "The light of the body is the eye," not because the eye gives the body light, but because the eye is the vehicle or organ by which the light is transmitted to the body and becomes useful to the body. All the light in the universe would

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

not do a man any good if he had no organ of vision; and all the light of truth can practically avail nothing to him who has no spiritual vision. There are other eyes beside the eyes of the body and mind. Paul speaks of the "eyes of the heart" in the epistle to the Ephesians:—

"That the eyes of your heart (Revised) being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints . . . and what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe."

One cannot recognise these things, and above all cannot receive them, by any mere intellectual vision. He must have spiritual faculties appropriate to the spiritual truths that he is studying. We find corresponding facts in other departments. We cannot understand a book very well if we do not know something about the author. Even Morley's "Life of Gladstone" is not an illuminating book, for the understanding of Gladstone's private life or public career, to a reader who has no knowledge of Mr. Gladstone or his biographer.

Moreover, we have all found out how love unlocks many doors that even intelligence does not unlock. Hatred shuts doors and double-locks them. Love puts its key in and opens them wide. Only love will interpret many mysteries, and only Love can ever fully interpret God's Book.

## Spiritual Faculties

One of the greatest defects of much modern Bible study is the absence of Spiritual Criticism,—the virtual denial of the supernatural element in the Word of God, and the judicial blindness of many of those who study it, remaining in gross ignorance of that which a little child by the Holy Ghost sees clearly, and in which the humblest and most unlettered believer rejoices more than all else.

That we may get firmer hold of this thought in regard to being spiritually enlightened, some passages of scripture should be considered most closely.

Isaiah xxix: 10-18. There is nothing more important in scripture in the way of testimony.

For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes; the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?

Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?

And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

Here the learned and the unlearned alike, untaught by the Holy Ghost, find the Bible a sealed book. The learned cannot understand it because it is sealed, and the reason is because the Lord hath poured upon them a spirit of deep sleep—blinded eyes and veiled faces, and this is because they have not honoured Him with a pure worship and a holy obedience. Such a passage of scripture as that is a strong confirmation of the positions already taken.

## Spiritual Faculties

This is referred to in the first epistle to the Corinthians 1: 13-III: 21. A very remarkable statement is made in chapter II: 8: "Which none of the princes of this world knew." Not the ignorant, unlettered and uncultured only, but the intellectual princes—the men who stood foremost in the community for intellectual power, even "the princes of this world" did not know.

But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Notice also, it is not that *one* eye has not seen, or one ear has not heard, or one heart has not imagined; but, if all that the eye has seen, that the ear has heard, and that the heart of man has conceived, were put together, they do not represent anything whatever of spiritual truth; and yet, even these things God has revealed to every humble believer who is taught of the Holy Ghost. That is the emphatic teaching of that scripture.

Notice one or two confirmatory passages: Matt. XVI: 16, 17, where Peter makes that grand confession of Jesus Christ:

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Peter, even after three years of constant, familiar converse with the Lord Jesus Christ, could not understand the divinity, the deity of Christ, without unveiled eyes; it had to be revealed to him by the Father himself.

Then look in Matt. xi: 27:

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

Even so, Father: for it seemed good in Thy sight.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal Him.

The worldly wise man is too wise to overlook what he regards the faults and mistakes of the Bible; and the worldly prudent man is too prudent to be entangled in the snares of faith which he regards as credulity; but the little child that comes to God, depending on the Holy Ghost, to him God reveals what the wise and the prudent have never seen, and could not understand.

## Spiritual Faculties

There is a beautiful hint in the 14th chapter of 1st Corinthians, verse 37, where Paul says, with regard to his own inspiration:

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

That is to say, one test that a man was spiritual and prophetical in the early church was that he recognised the voice of God in the testimony of Paul.

These are only part of the body of witness which the Word of God gives to the necessity of the spiritual eye to recognise spiritual truth.

The figurative form of speech used makes more emphatic the necessity of an enlightened mind and heart to understand the scriptures. A multitude of figures is used,—blindness, deafness, hardness, deadness, on the one hand, as the characteristic qualities of the unillumined mind, and then, outside of him, and apart from his own darkness, a veil, a seal of mystery. The Author of the Word of God does not intend that there shall be any question with regard to the teachings of the Bible on the subject of the necessity of the “spiritual man” to understand spiritual truth.

How then shall we approach, with reverent

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

spirit, the true study of the Word of God? A few rules may help the reader, as they have helped the writer for fifty years.

1. In the first place, Unquestionably accept the supernatural element in the Word of God. Let that be assumed in all studies as an absolutely undoubted thing. This will beget a spiritual humility,—for the doors of God's Temple of Truth are so low that no man can ever enter who does not bow correspondingly low; and, like every other great blessing that God has to give, Truth is entered through “a strait gate and a narrow way, and few there be that find it.”

2. Then there must be intellectual honesty—and candour is very rare. Oliver Wendell Holmes said that the mind of a bigot is like the pupil of the eye, the more light you pour upon it, the more it contracts; and Goethe said that when readers were inquiring as to the legibility of a document, they should first ascertain if all is clear within. The double effect of candour is that it makes us insist not only that there shall be evidence for truth, but that, when the evidence is found, there shall be prompt and immediate concession and submission to it.

3. There must be also moral honesty, because if there be an object, morally, in resisting the

## Spiritual Faculties

truth, no amount of evidence will overcome that; the moral obstacle must first be got out of the way. Otherwise, one might as well flood a blind eye with light, and expect thus to make up for blindness. We cannot cure the eyes by an operation on the ears, and we cannot cure the heart by an operation on the head. We have to remove the moral obstacle itself.

Moreover, a great principle is enunciated by Christ in John vii: 17, in regard to the necessity of obedience in order to understanding the Word of God: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." This is a law that prevails only in the spiritual sphere, and does not hold true in the intellectual. In the intellectual sphere a man believes a thing because he knows it to be true; in the spiritual a man knows a thing to be true because he believes it. In the intellectual sphere he does because he knows; in the spiritual he knows because he does. "If any man will *do* His will, he shall *know* of the doctrine." It is only the "undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord," who understand the riches of the truth of God, for He bars out from the Shechinah presence, where the fire glows that was never created or lit by man, those who do not come in the obedient spirit that walks with God.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

The introduction to this text above quoted is touching and pathetic. Those who heard Jesus Christ discussing such marvellous mysteries, said: "How knoweth this man letters?" and this was His answer: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." Because He did His Father's will perfectly, His knowledge of the will of God was absolutely perfect. Disobedience shuts the door and closes the shutter and prevents the incoming of the light of God; and every act of obedience opens the shutter wider, and lets in new rays of light into the soul.

A cultivated minister of Christ was riding on one of the trains that traverse the Pacific coast, and he saw in front of him a coloured man, evidently of much intelligence, reading in a religious review, an article on the higher criticism. He said: "You seem to be reading an article on the 'Higher Criticism.' How do you manage to keep up with such a subject?" "My dear sir, I do not seek to keep up with it, I seek to keep *ahead* of it." "And how do you keep ahead of it?" "By praying for Divine light to be thrown by the Spirit of God upon the Holy Scriptures, and then walking in obedience, and I find myself undisturbed by all the rationalism of the Higher Critics."

## Spiritual Faculties

A little girl in America, when she was asked by the Church Committee as to her knowledge of Jesus Christ, and asked to recite her experience, said: "I do not know if I have any 'experience.' All I know is that Jesus said 'Come unto Me,' and I came, and He said 'I will give you rest,' and He gave me rest." One of the older men said: "But, my dear, you do not seem to know much about the Slough of Despond." She dropped a curtsey and said: "*Please sir, I did not come that way.*" There is a way to get to the true knowledge of God without going through the Slough of Despond. We have only to ask on our knees for Divine guidance, and the Inspirer of the Word shall become the Interpreter of the Word and then indeed shall our feet walk safely and not stumble.

## CHAPTER II

### SPIRITUAL METHODS

THE Tabernacle was a typical structure. We shall treat it more at length when we come to speak of the typical teaching of the Old Testament, but there are some features of it that should always be before us, particularly the fact that it was made in three Courts,—an outer Court, an inner Court (the holy place), and an inmost Court (the Holiest of all). That to which we now specially advert is the fact that each of these three courts was lit by a different means. The outer court was open to the sky, and was lit by the sunlight. The inner court, which was enclosed, and had neither door nor window, was lit by the golden candlestick. And the inmost court was lit by the Shechinah fire, the uncreated fire of God.

These three courts may represent to us three courts that we meet in the holy scriptures. There is the outer court of Natural Truth, lit up by natural light, and perfectly apprehensible to the natural mind. There is the inner court, lit up by the Word of God itself, and demanding a comparison of

## Spiritual Methods

scripture with scripture in order to understand its mystery. But there is still an inmost shrine, lit up by the uncreated Shechinah fire, where few ever venture, but which is the sublimest sphere of divine revelation. It is in this inmost shrine and sphere that the disciple finds the impregnable confidence and assurance that he is dealing directly with God. The mysteries of spiritual illumination are, like all other mysteries of God, inscrutable to any human mind, but however inexplicable, they are explorable by the humblest and lowliest disciple. Though God has His exoteric and esoteric schools, they are not founded upon the principle of Pythagoras, who took only his intellectual favourites into the inner circle of his confidence. Our Lord's only favourites are the most humble-minded, childlike, teachable pupils; and those who are willing to become as little children,—to reverse the natural order—which is to advance from childhood to manhood—and go back from manhood to childhood, will find themselves able to enter into the holiest of all, and there enjoy the illumination that comes only from the Holy Ghost.

It is a necessity that, as in the outer court, there was a natural light that depended on natural sources, so in the holy scriptures there must be

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

natural truth addressed to the natural man; otherwise, he would never become, by any preparatory process of education, a spiritual man. It is perfectly obvious that the reason should first of all be overwhelmed by rational evidence that this is the Book of God. Then, as the investigator finds outward evidence to satisfy the reasoning powers that he is dealing with a supernatural Book, he is prepared to submit himself to the teaching of a supernatural Guide. Therefore it is of first consequence—and we return to this point, previously emphasised, for we are dealing now with the beginnings of faith—that we should go back to the rudiments of all rational conviction and look at the rock of reasonable proofs upon which the whole system of Christian doctrine and Christian life must ultimately rest.

So, like a little child, seeking to get back to the beginnings, we ask every reader to go back and start anew, so that he may unlearn any error that he has learned, and be confirmed in any truth in which he has been definitely instructed.

With what amazing pains and patience God has furnished outward rational proofs that in the book which is called the Bible, we have His Word. His great seal upon the holy scriptures, intended for the natural man, is the seal of

## Spiritual Methods

Prophecy, and Prophecy is used in holy scripture in two senses. The word does not necessarily mean "foretelling the future." A prophet is a divine teacher, one who *speaks in behalf of God*: he may foretell the future, or he may not; but ordinarily the full gift of Prophecy included (1) the forecast of the future, to instruct men as to coming events, and (2) insight into present needs, with the Divine remedy by which those needs are to be met.

In the Word of God we are told also what are the *criteria* by which we are to judge of prophecy, and hence, able to judge of prophecy, we are also able to judge of the Word of God of which it is the seal.

First of all, let us note most carefully the scriptural teaching on this subject.

In Deut. xviii:15-22 we have a significant passage of scripture with regard to the great coming representative Prophet that was to be in the likeness of Moses. In the 21st verse, the hearer or the reader is supposed to ask that natural and legitimate question, "How shall we know the word which the Lord hath *not* spoken?" Or, as Jeremiah puts it positively (xxviii:9), "How shall we know the word which the Lord *hath* spoken?" And here is the answer: "When the word of the prophet

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him." Here it is taken for granted that any sensible and rational man, when he hears a prophet professing to speak in the name of God, will challenge him: "How am I to know that the word you speak is the word of God?" If that which he prophesies comes to pass, we shall know that God has spoken; if not, we shall know that God has not spoken.

There is, however, one qualification of this test, and that is stated in the 13th chapter of Deuteronomy,—not very far off, so that even such a test as this may be closely linked to its proper qualification (xiii: 1-5.):

- If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,
  - And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them.
  - Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God proveth you (puts you to the test.)
- Mark this condition: even though a man should perform a miracle of utterance in prophecy, or a miracle of performance in action, *if he is at the same time teaching doctrine contrary to the Word*

## Spiritual Methods

of God, we are not to heed him. There are some things greater than miracles, as testimonies to God, and He distinctly tells us that a true prophet must be known by two great criteria: (1) the harmony of his predictive teaching with historic events; and (2) the higher harmony of his preceptive teaching with the mind and will of God as already revealed in scripture. <

In the early part of my ministry in the State of New York, I came across a most devout and godly woman in my congregation, a leader in prayer and faith and good works; but I discovered, before I had been long in the field, that she had been entangled in spiritualism, and had been walking contrary to the Word of God for a time, in consorting with spiritual media in meetings that were by no means altogether reputable for their spiritual character or their adhesion to the Word of God. I ventured one day to say to her: "I have heard this, and would like to know how it is possible that you ever got entangled in the snares of spiritualism." She replied that her husband had been taken from her, and she was told that he was appearing night after night and calling for his wife, and at last she said: "It can be no harm to go and see, and if it is he, I shall very readily find it out." So she went, and she gave

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

this test: "If this is my husband, let him tell me what we were doing on the 19th March, 1864." The response came through the medium, "That was our wedding day, and we went together to S——— to celebrate it." Nobody knew this fact but herself, and she seemed to be convinced at once that her husband was communicating with her. She forgot that *she knew* the fact, and that, if there were any subtle and unknown law of communication between her mind and the mind of the medium, it was very easy for the medium to tell her what she knew already. I then said to her: "How did you come to leave that circle, when all this glamour of supposed communication with your husband was attracting you to the seances?" She gave this remarkable answer: "I found they were teaching doctrine contrary to the holy scriptures. And I said to myself, I cannot explain these mysteries and wonders, but I can test them by the scripture principle,—if a prophet shall perform a sign or wonder in your eyes, either by utterance, predicting future events, or by action, performing some inexplicable wonder, if he teaches error, anything contrary to the truth, as already revealed and sanctioned in the Word of God, then you are to consider he is worthy to be put to death, rather than to be followed by you."

## Spiritual Methods

It is well to keep these great principles always before us, for the time is coming when Satan shall perform lying wonders to deceive if possible even the elect; and the fact that we cannot *explain* a wonder by no means justifies following either a practice or a teaching upon which God has thus set in advance the distinct seal of His disapprobation.

> We may safely challenge any man on earth to show that the great predictions of the prophetic scriptures have failed of fulfilment. There are in the prophecies in the Old and New Testaments together nearly a thousand separate predictions of future events, of which perhaps eight hundred are in the Old Testament and the rest in the New. All of them (except those which relate specifically to the last days,—the days immediately before and accompanying the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and His millennial reign, and the events at the conclusion of the millennial reign) have already been fulfilled or are now in the process of their fulfilment; and this body of fulfilled prophecy constitutes an impregnable rock for our confidence—evidence to the force of which even the natural man is susceptible, and by which any honest doubter may be led to the rational acceptance of this Word as inspired of God.

The Bible distinctly challenges any representa-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

tives of false faiths to produce any such phenomena as these. We look once more at this scripture challenge before passing on to other points in the argument. In Isaiah xli: 21-29, we read these words:

Produce your cause, saith the Lord: bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.

Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.

Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods; yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.

Behold ye are of nothing, and your work of nought; an abomination is he that chooseth you.

I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come; from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name; and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.

Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and before time, that we may say He is righteous; yea, there is none that sheweth; yea there is none that declareth; yea, there is none that heareth your words.

The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them; and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.

## Spiritual Methods

For I beheld, and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word.

Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing; their molten images are wind and confusion.

Here then stands the double challenge of God:

(1) Find Me prophecies in holy scripture that have not been fulfilled, if the time of their fulfilment is come; and

(2) Find Me successfully predicted events lying in the distant future that have ever been indicated by prophets who represent false faiths.

This double challenge stands absolutely without answer in this beginning of the twentieth century of the Christian era; and yet there are carping fools that are tossing the Bible to and fro, or kicking it about like a football, as though they were absolutely insusceptible to the divine proofs that this Word of God belongs on the infinitely exalted level of a divinely inspired Book; and that to this level no other so-called sacred book of any other so-called religion of the globe can by any means reasonably aspire by way of competition.

It is no easy thing to foretell future events, as an example may show. Having been studying prophecy for many years, I have taken pains

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

to notice some human predictions, and see how far they were accomplished,—and all of them have had most disastrous failure. For instance, there was Professor Adolph Falb, the Meteorologist. His name was associated with a number of predictions of approaching catastrophies.

Great consternation was created in Chili by his prediction of a severe earthquake in 1895, and crowds flocked out of Valparaiso to take refuge until the fatal day had passed. He predicted that the world would come to an end on the 13th November, 1899, by a collision with Temple's comet. We have no recollection of that having taken place!

Suppose that in the Book of God there were such ignominious failures as these! Yet Professor Falb had assistance that bible prophets never had. He had the records of meteorological disturbances, extending back hundreds of years, and not only so, but he was an accurate observer of the times, of the storms, and the winds, and the spots on the sun, etc. He had a scientific basis for his predictions, and yet they all came to nought—they were “wind and confusion.”

The Lord God says to us: “Produce your cause. Show your case. Vindicate your claims. Look backward with the vision of retrospective

## Spiritual Methods

prophecy, and tell us about former things, as Moses did about creation; look forward, and tell us of coming things, as John did. But no, your backward glances are erroneous, and your forward glances are delusive." So He set His Divine seal to His own holy Book, and the natural man may perceive and receive all the evidence that is necessary for its authentication if he will be honest with himself and the Truth.

Much every way depends upon this, for the moment we establish the fact that these prophecies are divine, we establish also the fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, for they concentrate on and converge in His wonderful personality; and this is the reason that we read in the Acts of the Apostles that the preaching of Apollos mightily convinced the Jews, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Some say: "Back to Christ!" as though we could have Christ without the Word. Even those that know experimentally what it is to have Christ revealed within, how would they ever have been introduced into that holy experience if they had not first come to the outer court of the Holy Scriptures, and there, under natural light, been able to see that the seal of God was put upon Him as the centre of prophecy? The

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

written Word and the living Word are linked inseparably, inevitably and eternally, and he that despises this Book despises Him; he that denies its infallibility denies His infallibility; he that denies its inspiration denies His deity; every blow at the Book is practically a blow at Him. This is the voice of God as with seven thunders in this day of defection, warning us that he who, with any word of contempt, speaks of this Book, is by the same word of contempt speaking of His Son.

Several things follow, the moment we accept the Bible as the Word of God, and God as its true and proper Author. Certain methods, conditions and rules of Bible study having been tried, may be recommended with the greater confidence, as by experiment they have proved the means of insight into the Word of God.

The leading principle is this,—that in the Word of God, He is to be regarded as the one and only Speaker. Hebrews 1:1-2.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners (or, more properly translated, “God, who in sundry operations, and in divers modes of communication”) spake, in time past, unto the fathers, by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.

## Spiritual Methods

The grand thought here is this,—that, back of all the prophets, and even of His own Son, the one Speaker is God. Many *mouths*, but one presiding, governing, controlling *Mind*. Even our Lord Himself takes His humble place as only the greatest among the prophets: “The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.” And He says in the intercessory prayer: “I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them.” He, as the last and greatest of Prophets, is the divine mouthpiece,—by way of pre-eminence THE Word of God,—as closely associated with the Father as the word of the tongue is with the thought which that word embodies—the incarnation of the thought of God, and the love of God, and the will of God as to a dying world. Behind all these more than forty speakers, there was the one infinite and divine Speaker, so that theirs were not merely human utterances, but divine utterances through human lips and human media.

This point cannot be emphasised unduly, for we are hearing in these days a great deal about “Pauline” and “Johannean” and “Petrine” theology and doctrine, and we know not what else. This is all delusive and misleading language. These

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

men all came as the representatives of God, and each spoke His message. When different men work on a cathedral, no man builds after his own fashion, or on his own plan, but each carries on the work according to specifications; they all follow a given plan, and perhaps they do not know how the building is going to look when it is completed —*there are many builders, but one architect.* This Book is one structure with many workmen, and the whole structure was in the mind of God before the first workman began even to lay the foundations; and all this talk about Paul teaching Neo-platonic theology, and Peter teaching his own particular style of Christian doctrine, is virtually making the whole Bible a hodge-podge of human notions, instead of a divine, consistent declaration of infinite and eternal principles. Throughout, God is the one Speaker.

When you admit that the Book is from one divine Author, you are compelled to admit the unity of its divine Authority; and then there are two or three things that naturally follow, to which we will refer later.

We now give some practical rules for the study of the Word of God, which, as we have said, have been put to practice, and found to be most helpful.

i. The first is the law of FIRST MENTION.

## Spiritual Methods

The late Benjamin Wills Newton, a most devout student of scripture, says:

I find in scripture a principle of interpretation which I believe, if conscientiously adopted, will serve as an unfailing guide as to the mind of God as contained therein. The first mention of a thing, the very first words of any subject of which the Holy Spirit is going to treat, are the keystone of the whole matter.

Thus the first mention of a thing generally gives character to most posterior occurrences of the same thing. Since there is but one Speaker throughout, He knows from the beginning what He is going to say, and can so shape His utterances as to forecast at the very outset what is to follow.

This we often find in other books. An author may in the first few paragraphs indicate the whole drift of his work, and hint the peculiar sense in which certain leading words used by him are to be understood by the reader.

We have applied this in hundreds of instances in the Word of God, and never knew it yet to fail. We give a few instances, just as they occur to the mind, in which this principle is illustrated:

(1) Take the first words of the Old Testament: "In the beginning God." Is there any right beginning in which God does not lead? That is the forecast of the entire teaching of the Word of God,

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

—that, from the beginnings of repentance in the penitent soul, through all the operations of faith, choice of the Saviour, committal to Him, abandonment of evil, recognition of the claims of the law of God and the Grace of God upon him, through every stage in the process of sanctification, until he comes to glory, God leads; and if at any time man leads, there is disastrous failure.

We believe that this is the sum and substance of that doctrine of “election,” about which there has been a great deal of controversy, and a great deal of difference of opinion.

I remember a case of a lady, who was very much afraid that she would be in some way identified with this doctrine, which she misconceived. Her husband was converted in a very remarkable way, and she was very desirous that he should join the church. The pastor went to see her, and said: “Mrs. P——, I understand that you are rejoicing in the conversion of your husband.” “Oh, it is glorious,” said she. “You believe the Lord converted him?” “Certainly.” “He did not convert himself?” “Of course not.” “Well, did the Lord intend to convert him before He did?” “Of course.” “Was there ever a time when He did not intend to?” “Well, I suppose not.” The pastor said: “Why, Mrs. P——, *you believe in election!*” She

## Spiritual Methods

replied: "Is *that* election?" "Yes," said he, "that is election, and practically all there is of it." The doctrine of election teaches us that God loved me before I loved Him, chose me before I chose Him, made the first advances to me before I advanced toward Him: and that in everything in my life that is good, He is the divine and ever blessed Beginner.

(2) Then we read in Genesis 1: 2: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Hebrew word means "brooded," like a bird. What has been the grand leading aspect of the Spirit's work ever since? He has always been the brooding Dove, settling down over the chaos of our moral nature, and bringing order out of confusion, light out of darkness, and life out of death.

The first reference to Him in the New Testament is consonant with the first in the Old: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." (Luke 1: 35.) The Holy Ghost is still like a brooding dove, and under His divine influence there is the miraculous conception of our Lord in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

(3) The first time we meet the number seven is in connection with the seventh day, and then it stands for completion, cessation, rest, finished

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

work: the number is found hundreds of times in the Bible, and it means substantially this in every case.

(4) A little further we read that the serpent was more subtle than any beast (Gen. III: 1), and from that time the great characteristic of "the old Serpent," the Devil, is subtlety; as Paul says to the Corinthians (II: xi: 3), "lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ."

(5) When we read the record of the first temptation what do we find? That the process which the devil employed was, first, to suggest a doubt as whether God had spoken; second, to deny what God had said; and third, to lead to disobedience; and that has been his method ever since,—first *doubt*, then *denial* and then *disobedience*. Follow this through, it is most remarkable, and can be traced perhaps in thirty instances.

(6) In Genesis xv: 6, we read that "Abram believed in the Lord and He counted it to him for righteousness." This is the first time the words "*believe*," "*count*" and "*righteousness*" occur, and we are taught—what is the pervading principle in the entire Book—that Faith is imputed for Righteousness, the first mention again indicating the

## Spiritual Methods

entire mind of God for all the rest of the Book. Illustrations of this might be indefinitely multiplied.

### II. A second law is that of FULL MENTION.

It is very natural that, if there be one Speaker behind the various books in the Word of God, He should, once for all, somewhere, declare to us His full mind upon any subject vital to our spiritual life,—that the scattered fragments shall once for all be gathered together in an exhaustive statement of His mind with regard to that particular thing.

It is a most significant fact that, in the Word of God we find again scores and hundreds of instances of this, and with almost no cases of *repetition*, unless there be special cause or reason for such repetition, as in the case of the Law. (Exodus xx; and Deut. v.) Even then there is found some differentiating factor, which shows that it is not absolutely repetition. Take the subject of Temptation, in I Cor. x, and James i. In the first passage the great emphasis is on *escaping* temptation, and in the second on *enduring*.

We have two parables on Importunity in Luke xi and xviii. In the former is the man who desired three loaves, and in the latter the woman that besought the judge to avenge her of her adversary.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

But in the latter case is one that is importuning for *her own sake*, and, in the other, is one that is importuning for the sake of *others*; the woman seems to stand for the Church or believer seeking to be avenged of the great adversary, and the man, the Church, standing before God pleading for a hungry and perishing world.

Such cases of Full Mention are so abundant that it is hard to find a single subject that has to do with spiritual life, upon which the Word of God does not give once, and generally only once, a full exhaustive statement of His will.

For instance, the blessings that attend obedience: Deut. xxviii; Vicarious sacrifice, Isaiah liii; Laws and Principles of the Kingdom, Matt. v-vii; the Last Things, xxiv; the sin of Neglect, xxv, over the whole chapter we might write the word "Neglect" and explain it all.

In Luke, God's love for the lost, chapter xv; God's mind about covetousness; almost the whole thirteenth chapter is an expansion of the motto: "Take heed and beware of covetousness." The contrast between the Here and the Hereafter, is in the last part of chapter xvi.

Pass on to John: About regeneration there is a full statement in ch. iii; about Christ as the Water of Life, iv; as the Bread of Life, vi; the work of the

## Spiritual Methods

Holy Ghost for the disciple, *xiv*; the Holy Ghost for the world, *xvi*; prayer in Christ's name, through *xiv*, *xv* and *xvi*, and nowhere else fully.

Do we need to understand with regard to the great principle of righteousness by faith? read in Romans *iii*, *10-21*; about the restoration of Israel, *xi*, and fully nowhere else. The septiform of unity in Christ, Ephesians *iv*; the mystery of Christ and the Church, *v*, latter part; the full panoply of God, *vi*, *10-17*, "Put on the whole armour of God."

About the principle of Christian loss and Christian compensation, read Phil. *iii*; about the peace of God, *iv*; about the Anti-Christ, II Thess. *ii*.

The nature of the God-Man, Hebrews *i* and *ii*; trials and triumphs of faith, *xi*; peril of unbelief, *xii*; about God's discipline of His children, *xii*, *1-11*. The inspiration of hope, and holy life? I Peter *i*; the final ordeal of fire? II Peter *iii*.

As to the malice and mischief and misery of the tongue, James *iii*; the "caste" spirit, and the ruin it works in the churches, chapter *ii*.

About the great White Throne—once only—Rev. *xx*; about the final consummation of the saints, *xxi* and *xxii*.

These are a few examples of the way in which there is a full mention once for all given in the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Word of God on important subjects having regard to the life of the disciple.

### III. ILLUSTRATIVE MENTION.

Once for all God has spoken by way of judgment upon men for the violation of His individual commandments, and generally only once. Why? because God, as a Law-Giver, thus gives, once for all, decisive signs of displeasure with regard to every specific form of evil-doing, and then forbears and keeps silence until the final day of reckoning; for, if He should visit every sin at once with condign punishment, He would depopulate the globe.

The first commandment is: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Refer to the judgment of Babel, where a false god was undoubtedly set up. If you seek God's judgment about graven images, look at Sinai and the golden calf. As to profaning holy things, the case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. As to the violation of Sabbath Law, the case of the man that gathered sticks on the Sabbath day. As to honouring parents, the case of Absalom. As to murder, turn back to Cain. Judgment of family impurity, look at Sodom. Theft? Look at Achan. False witness? Look at the case of Jacob, paying for it by twenty years' exile. Covetousness? Read the story of Ahab and Elijah.

## Spiritual Methods

So we have one Speaker, giving us in First Mention the indication of what He means to say hereafter; and in Full Mention giving us Divine guidance for every particular circumstance and duty and danger and peril of life; and, in Illustrative Mention, exhibiting His displeasure at various forms of disobedience.

## CHAPTER III

### SPIRITUAL ORGANISM

THE Science of Comparative Anatomy, as its name implies, depends upon comparison, for its results. That exquisitely cultured scientist who modelled the animal figures in the Crystal Palace grounds, which represent various antediluvian animals whose species are now extinct, I once saw demonstrate on the blackboard with masterly skill how it was that, with a single bone of an extinct species of animal, a scientific Comparative Anatomist could construct an accurate model of the whole animal. For instance, take that tooth of the lion, which corresponds to man's "eye tooth." It is very large and heavy at the root, sharp pointed, and curved inwardly. It must have been set in a very strong and powerful jaw, and that jaw must have been a part of a very compact and bony head, which head must have been set upon a thick, short, muscular neck, and that neck mounted upon broad and massive shoulder blades; and then, inasmuch as it is curved inward, and evidently is meant for a flesh-eating animal, with

## Spiritual Organism

which to tear a carcass asunder, there must be on the foot a claw with another curve outward, with which to take hold of the carcass at the other extremity, so that there will be coöperation between the two; and this argues a strong paw, armed with strong talons, and a rotary movement.

Continuing this subject of rules for Bible study, for lack of another and better term, there is what we may call "Comparative Mention." That is to say, the Bible is a kind of organism. Its parts so fit into each other, as that none can be dispensed with, all being complementary, each to the other; so that if we knew enough of the Bible, and had divine insight into its contents and structure, we should be able from one part of the book to forecast the rest,—as from one bone to build up a model of the entire form.

We have seen the law of First Mention,—that the first time the Holy Spirit uses terms, or refers to a subject or a theme in the Bible, He generally, if not always, forecasts His future treatment of that theme; and the law of Full Mention,—that once, and generally but once, the Holy Spirit expresses Himself in the Word exhaustively upon every great vital theme that has to do with holy living; and then Illustrative Mention, where, by way of illustration, God gives us His opinion or

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

judgment upon various crimes against God and man generally, by once visiting those crimes with condign punishment, in order to reveal to us His mind on all such sins, even though afterward they may be for the time passed over in silence.

An example *both* of First and Full Mention in one, is found in Exodus xxv.

It is the first time that there is any mention in the Word of God of making a Sanctuary for God to dwell in among men, and it is also the first time that any reference is made distinctly to a public and formal offering to the Lord for any such purpose.

Now, upon the ground of the First Mention, we should expect to find here a forecast of the mind of God as it will appear later on; and secondly, as this is remarkably full, and really extends through all the remainder of the book of Exodus, we might expect that here once for all God would exhaustively treat the subject; and we find in this passage as complete a setting forth of the mind of God upon the subject of making a sanctuary and how it shall be done, as can be imagined.

We observe here at least *ten* particulars. Note them: (1) A Sanctuary, that God may dwell in it; (2) a pattern to which everything, even to the slightest detail, is to be conformed; (3) an appeal to

## Spiritual Organism

His people only; (4) a condition, that none shall bring an offering, except of their own free will; (5) as to the givers, they shall embrace all the people that are willing; (6) as to gifts, they shall embrace all the gifts that they are able to bring, of whatever sort; (7) as to quality, always the best of its kind,—no refuse of any sort; if it is gold, it must be perfect gold, if it is goat's hair, it must be perfect goat's hair; (8) as to quantity, more than enough; (9) as to dedication, set apart for the glory of God; and finally (10) as to consecration, consecrated by the glory of God.

We commend this earliest example of making a sanctuary to modern builders of churches. It is no marvel that so little blessing comes in so-called sanctuaries, when every distinctive principle set down in the twenty-fifth and following chapters of Exodus is systematically violated. Think of it! What is our pattern? The models of an architect or an artist. Sometimes a lot of the seats in a so-called sanctuary should be given to the Blind Asylum, for nobody can see; and others of them to the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, for nobody can hear. Atrocious failures, for all the purposes of speaking and hearing, and some of them simply grand architectural monuments, without any reference whatever to the Divine glory. Think of the appeals

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

even to ungodly people, without any reference to their character,—anybody that will give money. And as to the quality of gifts, how often without any regard to giving the best we have; oftentimes the gifts of a few, the multitude taking no part; sometimes of grudging necessity and constraint, and without any free will. And as for quantity, so deficient as that what we call Houses of God are saddled with mortgages that sometimes cause them to be turned over to the purposes of the Devil. Suppose that in building houses for God we look back to the Book of Exodus and see what God's mind is, and then, when we have brought a house to Him under all the conditions here laid down, solemnly and sweetly set it apart for His glory, and look for Him to sanctify by His glory what we have sanctified to His glory.

Another example of Illustrative Mention may be taken from the Book of Job. That is the one Book in the Bible that exhaustively treats the subject of disciplinary suffering, and there is nothing that remains to be said on the great general subject, after the Book of Job has been mastered.

In the first place, there are five trials of Job: (1) The loss of property; (2) the loss of family; (3) loss of health; (4) loss of his wife's sympathy, who said: "Curse God and die,"—more bitter it

## Spiritual Organism

would be to some of us than all the rest, to lose a wife's sympathy in trial—and then last of all, (5) the loss of his good name, when the three friends who came to console him, sat like a coroner's jury on his case, and unanimously decided that he was a bad man, and that these trials were a punishment for his evil-doings. It shows us how dear to all of us is the pride of our reputation. But notice that the narrative does not leave us there, but tells us the way in which Job was recovered. He saw God, and that vision of God broke down even his pride of reputation, for before the holiness of God self collapsed, and self-righteousness collapsed, and he saw himself to be filthy and vile, and his only study then was to be approved of God even if he was disapproved of man; and then came blessing and victory, and greater prosperity than ever.

The specific theme of this chapter, as has been said, is Comparative Mention, or Parallel Mention; for it is that method of study in which we set side by side different passages of the Word of God; first, for the purpose of comparing them as to the things in which they resemble each other; and secondly, to compare them in things in which they are unlike, and learn a lesson from contrast; and third, to see how one adds to and completes or

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

complements that which is contained in the others. We give a few illustrations, for in this matter illustration is demonstration.

For instance, compare the parable of the Talents and the parable of the Pounds, one in Matthew xxv, and the other in Luke xix. The superficial reader says that the two are alike; that they are different versions by Matthew and Luke of one discourse; but a careful and prayerful examination reveals quite as many points of dissimilarity as of similarity. In the case of the Talents there was an unequal distribution, an equal improvement, and an equal reward. In the case of the Pounds there was an equal distribution, and an unequal improvement and unequal reward. It is by putting the two together, that we learn God's principle of adjudication in the matter of reward. So far as endowments have been similar and identical, but have been unequally improved and put to use, the rewards will be unequal; but, so far as endowments have been unequal, but the improvement proportionate, the reward will be the same. But, without both of these parables, we would be left in darkness as to one part of the philosophy of God's dealing with men.

Another example is found in the similarity between the fulness of the Holy Ghost in Ephesians

## Spiritual Organism

v: 19 and following verses, and the fulness of the Word of God in Colossians III: 15, etc. In those two passages almost identical language is found: the same overflowing of song to God; the same spirit of thanksgiving; the same spirit of mutual submission; the same regulation of all our domestic and social ties and relationships,—husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants. But one of these passages begins with the command or injunction to "be filled with the Spirit," and the other with the injunction: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom," and it is only when we put the two commands together that we understand the full mind of God. The same results in Christian, private domestic and social life will be developed when we are filled with the Spirit, as when we are filled with the Word of God. But, more than that, no man is ever filled with the Spirit, in whom the Word of Christ does not dwell richly in all wisdom; and no man is ever indwelt richly in all wisdom with the Word of God if he is not filled with the Holy Spirit.

There is one other illustration of comparative mention which is one of the most beautiful in the Word of God. It is the comparison between the unit of measurement in the Old Testament,

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

and the unit of measurement in the New Testament, as to the power of God in the believer.

The first you will find in Micah vii: 15:

According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt, will I show unto him marvellous things.

Whenever God wanted to impress His people of old with the mightiness of His power to interpose in their behalf, He always referred them back to the wonders of the Exodus. But, when He comes to the New Testament, the Old Testament unit of measurement is cast aside as wholly inadequate, and now we read in Ephesians i: 19-23:

"... according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion," &c., &c.

- That is the new unit of measurement in the New Testament. "According to My doings when I brought you out of the land of Egypt," He says two or three hundred times in the Old Testament to the people of Israel; "According to the energy of the power of His might," He says to the New Testament disciple, "as it was exemplified in the resurrection and ascension." Let us compare these two.

## Spiritual Organism

What are the peculiarities of the Old Testament history of the Exodus? A marvel of judgment in visiting the Egyptians with death and overwhelming them in the Red Sea. A marvel of grace in passing by the bloodstained doorway. A marvel of power in heaping up the waters of the Red Sea on either side. A marvel of leadership in the pillar of cloud and fire. A marvel of condescension in dwelling among them in His tabernacle. And a marvel of faithfulness in continuing their Covenant God.

Look in the New Testament: A marvel of judgment, overwhelming Satan and all his hosts. Of grace, passing by the bloodstained cross and the believer identified with it. Of power, raising up Christ from the dead. Of guidance, giving the Holy Ghost as the new pillar of cloud and fire. Of condescension, dwelling in the believer himself as His temple. And of fidelity, keeping him safe in the life of Jesus Christ to the very end.

These are some of the things that we learn by comparison of scripture with scripture,. Let any man answer this question: Different men wrote the different books of the Bible: how comes it to pass that, where the human writers are different, there is this marvellous correspondence, when by comparison we learn that a truth foreshadowed in the Old Testament is grandly and gloriously fulfilled

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

in the New? The moment that you admit that there is one Speaker behind all the human mouths, and one Author behind all human writers, you are prepared to accept this correspondence, which is an inexplicable mystery and problem, otherwise.

Comparative Mention often develops Contrast,—points of unlikeness as well as points of likeness.  
A few instances will cover a large territory.

Take, for example, the Adversary the Devil, and the Advocate Jesus Christ. This contrast extends throughout the whole of the Word of God, from Genesis III: 15, where the Seed of the woman and the Serpent and his seed first appear in sharp contrast, to the very end of the Apocalypse. And how magnificent is the contrast!

The Adversary eternally against the believer and God; the Advocate eternally in favour of God and the believer.

The Adversary entangling and ensnaring the believer by the things seen and temporal; The Advocate alluring him by the things unseen and eternal.

The Adversary accusing the believer day and night; the Advocate defending the believer day and night. The Adversary sending forth evil spirits to possess men: the Advocate sending the Holy Spirit to inhabit the believer.

The contrast might be multiplied to a score of

## Spiritual Organism

points, and that Contrast is one of the keys that unlock the chambers in the House of the Interpreter, from Genesis to Revelation.

Take another, and perhaps the most complete example of Contrast—the contrast between Babel or Babylon (I am inclined to think that Babel is the City, and Babylon the system which develops out of it), and the New Jerusalem. Can there be any sharper contrast in the Word of God? This is another of the keys that unlock holy scripture.

We first meet Babel in Genesis xi, and there, what is it? The centre of a Godless civilisation; its basis, concentration rather than diffusion; its motive self-interest and self-glory, rather than the glory of God; it has a religious cult, but it is idolatrous; it is the home of wealth and luxury and elegance and human pleasure, and every form of human indulgence, but there is no God there; and it ends in confusion, though it began in comparative order.

Now look over into the book of the Revelation, and what do you see in the New Jerusalem? In every respect the exact contrast with Babel. The glory of God lightens it, and He alone is the temple of it, and is the God that is worshipped there; nothing enters that defiles or works abomination, or makes a lie; its law is not self-interest, but

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

worship, obedience and service; everything about it is different; even the gold is different,—the gold of Babel was opaque, but the gold of the New Jerusalem is transparent; the gold of Babel you could not see God through, but the gold in the New Jerusalem you can see Him through; the gold of Babel was worshipped; the gold in the New Jerusalem is a pavement, and when you put the gold under your feet and tread on it, it is in its right place.

Notice where the transition is found—on the *day of Pentecost*. How significant? They began to build Babel out of clay, and they aspired to build toward heaven. But, on the day of Pentecost, when the New Jerusalem began to appear, it was let down from God out of heaven; no earthly materials, but heavenly materials; no earthly plan, but a heavenly plan; not made of earthly clay, its gems and its gold celestial.

We talk boastingly about our “twentieth century civilisation,” but it is a Babel civilisation,—there is no use of denying it. In the description of Babylon in Revelation xvii and xviii, all the leading features of this boasted civilisation of the twentieth century are delineated—luxury, monopoly, wealth, pleasure, treasure seeking, human glory, concentration, the bond of self-interest.

## Spiritual Organism

And what becomes of Babylon? It perishes, not by outward assault, but by its own inward rottenness. And that is exactly what is going to destroy our boasted modern civilisation,—its inward rottenness; and yet even Christian people are often blind to the fact that this civilisation is essentially selfish, Godless, Satanic.

Moreover, when you compare scripture with scripture, you get not only likeness and unlikeness, but you get Complementary Growth,—additions from time to time to that which you have learned before, so that these various parts of the scripture become complementary and supplementary to each other. You look at the right hand and at the left hand, and you observe that there are points of similarity and points of dissimilarity. The points of similarity indicate that they are for the same uses; the points of dissimilarity indicate that they are intended to co-operate. Suppose the thumb of the left hand were at the other side of the hand, how could the two hands co-operate? Sir Charles Bell's "Bridge-water Treatise" on the human hand, shows how a learned man can take this one member of the body, and write hundreds of pages, and not begin to exhaust his theme. When we come to understand our Bibles, we shall find that there are

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

right hands and left hands in this organic body of truth, and that their very dissimilarities as well as similarities indicate their places in the body, and that they co-operate to complete our views of truth, of duty, of service.

We give some illustrations of this from a wide and almost illimitable sphere, calling attention to a few things that perhaps some may not have noticed.

There are three kinds of works represented in the Bible: Good works; Wicked works; and Dead works. Dead works and wicked works are not the same. Far from it. We all know what good works are and what wicked works are, but as to Dead works, they are the works that have the outward form and appearance of good works, but they lack their vitality and spiritual energy.

Twice we are warned against dead works: once in Hebrews vi: 1, and again later in ix: 14. The first reference being probably to the dead works of the unbeliever, and the second to the dead works of the believer.

Those are dead works which have not the Spirit of God in them; that are done in carnal energy with carnal motives, with carnal ends, and with a carnal spirit. If you do not know what dead works are, it is very important you should under-

## Spiritual Organism

stand, for largely the whole device of ritualism is based upon the illusion of dead works. It is but a form of Godliness in the place of its power; and it is trusting to rites and ceremonies and ordinances in the absence of the inspiring Spirit. But do not you think you are not Ritualists because your worship is very simple! Because behind the simplest worship may hide the same dead works,—just as a woman may be just as proud of her Quaker drab as she is of all the colours of the rainbow.

In fruit, we find the same three-fold division,—good, bad and *wild*. Wild fruit is not the same as bad. Wild has the form of good, but lacks its flavour and savour; so that the good works correspond to the good fruit, the wicked works to the bad fruit, and the dead works to wild fruit. We can only learn this by careful comparison.

In three great passages in scripture the Vine appears: Isaiah v; Psalm LXXX; and John xv. The lesson taught in each of these passages is quite different from the lessons taught in the others, but you have to take the three together to learn what God would have to say to His people with regard to the Vine that He brought out of Egypt, casting out the heathen, and planted.

In Isaiah v the great emphasis is upon God's

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

utter chagrin and disappointment in His Vine, that, after He had searched out a good soil, and given it every opportunity to bear fruit, hedged it about and protected it, and built a tower in the midst of it, He looked that it should bring forth good grapes, and it brought forth nothing but wild fruit,—nothing but dead works.

The emphasis in the 80th Psalm is on the external injury done to the Vine, as in the 5th of Isaiah it is on the lack of internal vitality.

. . . The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it, . . . and there is no hope but in the living God. The enemy is seeking to destroy it.

Now when you come to John xv, that matchless parable of Jesus Christ, you find that there are seven words about which the whole parable and its lessons turn: Vine, Branch, Fruit; Abide, Ask; Love, Joy.

The secret of Life is to be a Branch on the True Vine.

The secret of Fertility is to abide in Christ, and the result of such abiding is that we participate in His love and His joy.

We add a single example more with regard to this complementary treatment, and that is the Two Paracletes. Very few things present, to my

## Spiritual Organism

mind, a more magnificent theme of thought and study than the office of the Two Paracletes,— (1) the Holy Spirit, the word being translated "Comforter" in John xiv; (2) Jesus Christ, the word being translated "Advocate" in the first epistle of John.

There are some words which should not be translated, like "Jehovah," and "Abba" and "Alleluia," and "Paraclete," is one of them. There is no English word that can properly represent the word "Paraclete," and if it were simply transferred into the language as an untranslated word, the imagination and the knowledge of the believer could invest it with those thoughts that belong to it, as shown by the context in various places where it is found in the New Testament.

The significant thing is that both the Holy Spirit and Christ are called by the same name, Paraclete, and it is a very peculiar word, never, to my knowledge, used about anything else, never applied if I remember rightly to anyone but the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus. Look at the beautiful conception:

The Holy Spirit as the Paraclete dwells within;  
Jesus Christ as the Paraclete dwells on high.

The Holy Spirit comes from God to represent

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

God to me; Jesus Christ goes from me to God to represent me to God.

The Holy Spirit becomes the Energy of life in me for service and suffering; Jesus Christ is to be the Energy of defence for me against all accusation and condemnation, in the presence of God.

The Holy Spirit becomes to me the representative of Jesus Christ on earth; Jesus Christ becomes the representative of my soul and spirit in Heaven.

How beautifully they co-operate in the matter of prayer. In one place the three persons of the Godhead are brought into their proper connection in the matter of prayer, that is, in Eph. II: 18, "For through Him (Christ) we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Through Christ, by the Spirit, unto the Father. Did you ever ask yourself why it is necessary to have a Paraclete within for prayer, and a Paraclete at the Throne also for prayer?

Here is a stream. It starts in a pure spring, and it empties into your own drinking vessel in your own house. But it passes meanwhile through a channel, where it takes up corruption. It starts pure, but it will not come to you pure unless you filter it after it has passed through its channel.

## Spiritual Organism

True prayer starts in the groans of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer:

We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us (*i.e.*, within us) with groanings which cannot be uttered.

But that prayer which the Holy Spirit awakens passes through the channel of our consciousness and individuality; it takes the taint of our selfishness, our sensuality, corruption, carnality; and in order to come to God pure, as it began in the suggestion of the Spirit, it must pass through a refining and filtering channel, and that is the Paraclete above. So far as we are in fellowship with the Spirit on earth, He can truly pray within us; and so far as we are in fellowship with the Paraclete above, He can truly represent us; and in such cases, prayer is as sure to be answered as that there is no conflict between the persons of the Deity; for the prayer that starts with the Spirit, and passes to its goal through the Personality of Christ, must come to the Father with the double recommendation that it was begotten by the Spirit, and presented by His dear Son.

There are many things in this divine book that, to the merely intellectual man who approaches them in a scientific spirit, remain abstruse and

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

difficult and perplexing, but to the little child who comes to the Word of God simply as a little child, to know for the sake of knowing the truth and doing his duty, everything becomes easy and simple and natural. If you do not come to the word in the spirit of little children, it will do you little good. The Bible demands no intellectuality, or scholarship, or learning, but it does require, to some extent, the spirit of a little child, and such readers find it the Man of their counsel, and the Guide of their steps.

How awful is that warning in the conclusion of the Book of Revelation:

If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

In this book there is nothing to be taken away, and to this book there is nothing that can be added. In this graciously and gloriously complete organism, there is neither a superfluous member, nor is there a lacking member. No man can show anything that can be dispensed with, and no man can show anything that for human guidance in truth

## Spiritual Organism

and duty should be within these pages, that is not there. And so, the more we study, the more we love, and, while others criticise, we worship and adore.

## CHAPTER IV

### SPIRITUAL STRUCTURE

THE Word of God shows its magnificence and grandeur partly from the fact that there is no point of view from which its wonders can be fully seen or fully described. You may look at it on the one side as a continuous utterance of the will of God; you may look at it as an organic body pervaded by the Divine Life, in which every part is like a member of an organism; or you may look at it, as we are to look at it now, as a Structure,—not a body, but a building.

Some aspects of the Word of God can be best presented under the figure of an imposing edifice. There is one passage in the Book of Proverbs that has caused much controversy among commentators as to just what it means,—Proverbs viii and ix,—and it is known as the “Impersonation of Wisdom.” In chapter ix: 1 we read these remarkable words:

“Wisdom hath builded her house,  
She hath hewn out her seven pillars.”

Wisdom would naturally construct a house of

## Spiritual Structure

Truth. Possibly this,—the Bible,—is the house Infinite Wisdom has built, and the seven pillars may express the seven-fold completeness of those great and glorious doctrines which make up, together, the sum and substance of the teaching of the Word of God; there are many hints in the Bible which seem to point to the Word as a structure, built up upon principles of eternal Wisdom:

Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone, in whom the whole building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.—Eph. ii: 20-21.

If that, on the one hand, is true of the Church of Jesus Christ, on the other hand, it is equally true of the Word of the living God.

We consider the Word of God now under the figure of a structure, an architectural figure.

All perfection in building implies *four* things: (1) Perfect Beauty, which is found in the embodiment of an idea or conception; (2) perfect Unity, which depends upon form, and form is both inclusive and exclusive, it takes in and it leaves out, —that is what constitutes perfect form; (3) in every building there must be perfect Harmony, and that implies a plan which extends to all the parts of the building, and which unites them in serving

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

one great purpose; (4) and finally, there must be Growth, or advance, from corner-stone to capstone: "In whom the whole building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."

That last idea, that of Growth, will occupy us hereafter, but let us first run rapidly over the first three of these points, and notice the Beauty, the Unity, and the Harmony of the Word of God.

The Beauty of an edifice, as has been said, depends upon the embodiment of some one great controlling idea. Not everyone that looks upon a building understands what is really the charm of any edifice that approaches to perfection. Take the leading orders of Architecture—each stands for something: the Egyptian, for massiveness and strength; the Doric, for simplicity and sublimity; the Ionic, for grace and delicacy; the Corinthian, for elaborate beauty and splendour; while the pointed Gothic has been associated with buildings appropriated and consecrated to religious ends, partly because pointed Gothic, especially, suggests peculiarly religious ideas. The Roman arch starts from the earth, and, at its highest reach, sweeps back again, but the pointed Gothic arch, though it starts from the earth on each side, at its highest reach points forever upward, never returning to the earth. Whenever you see a pointed Gothic

## Spiritual Structure

building, you will always see a finger that points upward. Pinnacles, spires, arches, all the details of a pure specimen of pointed Gothic, suggest a still upward aspiration.

> The word of God is a magnificent specimen of Divine Architecture, and it embraces and embodies one great overmastering conception,—Salvation: God working out salvation; man receiving salvation. And there is a very fine expression of the whole ultimate object of this dominating idea of the holy scriptures, where in Eph. 1 we read:

That he might gather together in one all things in Christ, even in Him.

That is the dominating conception of this holy building of God

Indispensable to this conception of perfect Beauty, the embodiment of some great thought, is Unity which consists in the *form*, technically so-called; which shall include everything that is essential to this great idea, and exclude everything that would mar it or prevent its development. So we shall be prepared to understand why it is that the Word of God includes what it does, and excludes what it does; and this answers many difficulties which have been suggested by sceptical and infidel minds, and to which we have not perhaps always a ready answer. It

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

is very plain why the Bible includes certain things, but how few ever think how all-inclusive it is! Suppose we take the whole structure of Biblical truth, from the opening book, Genesis, to the closing book, the Apocalypse, did you ever think of what you have included there, and of the order in which these things are found?—an order which can in no case be interrupted or changed without a manifest loss to this high, Divine Unity. Remember that the dominant idea is man's Salvation, Redemption by Blood, Gathering together in one all things in Christ. Now what is the first thing you meet in the Bible?

(1) Man's creation and fall. Why? Because that demonstrates both man's capacity for Redemption, and man's awful ruin that needs Redemption.

(2) Then the next thing you meet is the promise of Redemption, afterwards amplified in many prophetic utterances. And why should this be next? Because the first thing that man needs in his ruin is to have set before him distinctly the hope and expectation of a Redeemer.

(3) Then the next thing you find is an elaborate system of sacrifices and offerings. And why that? Because it typically presents before man what Redemption is and what it accomplishes, and what

## Spiritual Structure

are the terms upon which Redemption is realised; and, just as the promise and the prophecy inspire hope, sacrifice and offering incite and educate faith.

(4) Then, in the beginning of the New Testament are the fourfold Gospel narratives, and what are they for? They present to the thought those great facts upon which the reality of Redemption is based,—that Jesus Christ was incarnate; that He died for men, according to the scriptures; that He rose the third day, according to the scriptures; —the great facts which Paul tells us in I Cor. xv, are the substance of his preaching, and the basis of the faith of the disciple.

(5) What is the next thing? Pentecost, because the facts of Redemption and the truths of Redemption will save no human soul without the power of God to apply them, and Pentecost is the revelation of the power.

(6) Then you have, following, the history of the Church through one generation, in the Acts of the Apostles, and what is that for? It is the practical test and proof that Redemption is adequate to work its great result.

(7) And the last thing you have is the glimpse of the coming Kingdom, and the final triumph, when all things are brought together in one in

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Christ, and what is that? That is the Goal of Redemption.

There is nothing left out that ought to be there, and there is nothing there that ought not to be there. And all are exactly in the order in which, as we see, Infinite Wisdom planned that they should be, and in which the necessity of things demands that they should be,—(1) Man's ruin; (2) a promise of Redemption; (3) typical setting forth of Redemption; (4) the facts in the history of Jesus Christ upon which the Redemption is actually based; (5) the power which makes the truth and the blood of Christ effective; (6) the history of the Church that shows it is effective; (7) and the Kingdom that opens up to us the goal of Redemptive history.

All this is very remarkable, and it is all there. It is no fancy, but a fact; no invention, but a discovery that many a child of God has made in the patient and prayerful study of the holy scriptures.

Let this suffice to show what is meant by the exclusiveness of form.

When God was setting forth the great truth of Redemption by Blood, and making that the formative idea of this great building, He left out everything that would not contribute towards the de-

## Spiritual Structure

velopment of that idea. Hence the Bible passes silently over the great mysteries of Science; it is not a book to reveal scientific truth, and only touches it casually and incidentally. This has been a stumbling block to philosophers, who have thought it a very strange thing that a Book that professes to be Divine should make man the lord of the universe: "Why, the universe is the master of man, not man of the universe." Not so thought God. God considers that one man is greater than all the planets and stars that roll through the firmament, because, when they shall perish, he shall look on the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds, as unending in existence as God Himself.

For similar reasons, the Bible passes by History. We have no secular history in the Bible. The great world empires, like Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria and Persia,—the Bible never refers to them except in the most incidental way; and in a few chapters, mostly devoted to prophecy about their ruin. But here is a miserable little tribe of a few thousand people, on a narrow strip of land on the Mediterranean, about as broad as Wales, and the Bible expends the most of its space in dealing with this little contemptible tribe of Jews! Voltaire thought that was a perfectly obvious proof

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

that the Bible could not be the Book of God. "Why," he said, "just think of these great empires. How gladly we could afford to be in ignorance of this little tribe, for the sake of knowing more about the great civilisation of Egypt, and the splendid empire of Persia." But not so does the Lord regard it. One little village; one ruined inn; one despised stable; one manger that has long ago rotted into dust, is more precious in His eyes than all Babylon and Nineveh and Thebes. No metropolitan city of the world, no magnificent palace of its monarchs, ever had the importance in God's eyes which that stable and that manger in Bethlehem have.

The Bible passes Art by. Of all the works of Human Art, there is nothing that God ever looked upon with the same Divine emotion that he did on two crosspieces of wood that were erected on Golgotha. No great rhetorical efforts in His book, no attempts at great epic poems. In the grandest edifices we never construct ornament, but we ornament construction; and God never constructs ornament in His Bible. He constructs His Bible and ornaments the construction. Ornament is never an object. Did you ever look at the tabernacle? No beauty there, that men should desire it. From an artistic point of view not an object

## Spiritual Structure

of real beauty in it. The sharply contrasted colors of blue and purple and scarlet, people of refined taste would think were gaudy; and those cherubic figures, which mingled men and cattle and birds all together in one mongrel form, violated all the canons of art. Beauty was not the object,—it was the teaching of Divine truth, and the beauty gave way before the utility. God was not seeking after beauty, He was not seeking to magnify Art and satisfy artistic temperament.

And Philosophy—if men had written the Bible, they would have packed it full of Pythagoras and Socrates and Plato, but the Lord never makes mention of human wise men, and when the Epicureans and the Stoics are mentioned, it is casually. The Lord was not writing a Book of Philosophy, except the philosophy of the plan of salvation, and that is foolishness to the wise, as their wisdom is consummate foolishness with the Author of the Bible.

Let us be sure that, when God makes the Bible, He knows what to leave out as well as what to put in, and He never violates the law of Unity of form for the sake of pleasing the people who are to look at the building. There is all included that ought to be there to express God's Divine idea, and there is nothing that would divert attention from the purpose He had in view.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Not only is there Beauty in the Bible, consummate and perfect,—not only is there Unity in the Bible, consummate and perfect; but there is Harmony, and that implies a plan that extends to all the parts, and makes them in accord with one another. There are many things in a building that are subordinate, but they are also co-ordinate, that is, if it is a true building, they all tend and help to emphasise that which is designed to be the dominant idea.

In the Bible the supreme idea is Redemption by Blood; but many other things stand out very conspicuously, like great towers. As the 48th Psalm reads:

Walk about Zion, and go round about her:  
tell the towers thereof.

Mark ye well her bulwarks.  
Consider her palaces.

That language may be applied to the Word of God. Walk about the Bible; go round about it; tell the towers thereof,—the great soaring doctrines that rise above all other truths like mountain tops. Mark well its bulwarks, its impregnable defenses; consider its palaces, its unparalleled delights; all are to be found in this Book,—unrivalled teachings, impregnable defenses, unparalleled delights. In this great building of God

## Spiritual Structure

mighty towers rise, as, for instance, the Righteousness of God on one hand, and the Love of God on the other, the two apposite attributes of God that together make up His perfection. His Righteousness with an Infinite loathing of sin, and His Benevolence with an Infinite love towards the sinner. And all the subordinate parts of this blessed Book contribute to these its great dominant ideas, while every little part has, as it were, a unity in itself, as we shall see hereafter.

There is a grand reason why certain facts and truths are so prominent. Take the New Testament, for instance. The great prominent events of the New Testament are the Incarnation of Christ, His Transfiguration, His Crucifixion, His Resurrection and Ascension, and His Coming again.

The Incarnation, because that was the Redeemer coming to earth.

The Transfiguration, because that was the one occasion upon which that Redeemer manifested forth His full glory as the Deity,—at no time before, and at no time after, while He was on earth, did He ever sweep aside His human disguise, and reveal that Imperial Star of Royalty on His breast, and that Diadem of universal Empire on His brow.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

The Crucifixion of Christ, because that was the occasion when His atoning blood was shed.

The Resurrection, because then He showed Himself the Prince of Life, who could not be holden under the power of death.

The Ascension, when He went up above all heavens to take His place on the right hand of God.

The Second Coming, when He comes to finish and consummate the Redemptive work.

These facts belong to God's scheme, as the great keys to the whole system.

There are certain Truths that come forth into prominence, just as there are certain facts. Let us recur to one of them,—Vicarious Atonement. At the risk of repetition of what has often been treated before, let us look again at the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. In the second portion of this prophecy, from the 40th to the 66th chapters, twenty-seven chapters are entirely occupied with the suffering and the triumph of the Messiah. They constitute one great Messianic Poem in the Old Testament. In the Hebrew there are no chapters, but there are three divisions, marked by a refrain, at the end of the 48th and 57th chapters,—“There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked,” and the same sentiment, expanded in a fuller form, at the end of the 66th:

## Spiritual Structure

For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched,  
which is another way of saying, there is no peace to the wicked. This refrain divides the poem into three about equal parts. In the exact centre of the middle part is the 53rd chapter which is entirely devoted to setting forth the doctrine and fact of Vicarious Suffering. There are only twelve verses in it, but fourteen times is the fact announced that this suffering was borne for others. The chapter is divided into four parts of three verses each: these successive parts treat of Christ (1) as a rejected Servant of God; (2) as a Vicarious Sufferer; (3) as an outraged Victim; (4) as a triumphant Victor.

Looking into the chapter carefully, we find seven statements of Vicarious Atonement in the first part, such as:

- (1) "He hath borne our griefs;"
- (2) "Carried our sorrows;"
- (3) "He was wounded for our transgressions;"
- (4) "Bruised for our iniquities;"
- (5) "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him;"
- (6) "With His stripes we are healed;"
- (7) "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Then, in the latter part, there are seven more statements of Vicarious Suffering:

- (1) "For the transgression of my people was He smitten,"
- (2) "Make His soul an offering for sin;"
- (3) "By His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many;"
- (4) "He shall bear their iniquities;"
- (5) "He was numbered with the transgressors;"
- (6) "He bare the sins of many;"
- (7) "Made intercession for the transgressors."

And, midway between, almost the exact literal centre of the chapter, are these words:

"Brought as a lamb to the slaughter."

Now this is most significant,—Twenty-seven chapters; a middle section of nine chapters; the middle chapter in the nine the 53rd; in the 53rd, four representations of Christ, with fourteen mentions of vicarious sacrifice, seven in the fore part and seven in the latter part, and, between the two: "Brought as a lamb to the slaughter," which identifies that chapter with the sacrifice of the lamb, from Abel's lamb on to the end.

This reminds one of some great rose window in the front of a cathedral, with its symmetrical sections all radiating from one centre, but, in that centre of all, one ruby pane of glass, with a repre-

## Spiritual Structure

sentation of a slain Lamb. God meant to have that great truth stand out so conspicuously, that none could look at the Word of God without seeing it, and without thinking of the central position it occupies in that great prophecy, as itself a demonstration of what God thinks of the importance of this truth. When a man says, "Away with the blood!" ask him whether he has ever read the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. The blood stain is upon every page of scripture. The blood is the scarlet line on which all the promises and prophecies, like pearls, are strung. To do away with the Blood is to do away with the Bible and the Christ and Salvation.

As there are many things that are prominent in the Bible, there are many things that are subordinate, and yet even these present their own little unities. Take that phrase: "In Christ." The effect of that one phrase is to link together the whole of the New Testament. It is very short, only two words,—yet that one phrase helps to explain every book in the New Testament. And if one other word be added to this short phrase, it will express that which differentiates every one of the books from all the rest:

Romans, "In Christ, justified." Corinthians, "In Christ, sanctified." Galatians, "In Christ, crucified." Ephesians, "In Christ, ascended."

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Philippians, "In Christ, satisfied." Colossians, "In Christ, complete." Thessalonians, "In Christ, Victorious." Hebrews, "In Christ, bettered." (The word "better" occurs thirteen times in that Epistle, at the critical points in the argument.) And so you may go on through till you get to Jude: "In Christ, preserved." So that little phrase "In Christ" interprets every one of those books. It is the link that unites them all: "That he may gather together in one, all things in Christ." He is the unifying Bond.

One phrase of seven words, John XIV: 20: "Ye in Me and I in you," comprehends the whole of Christian life. "Ye in Me" for standing, "I in you" for state. "Ye in Me" for justification, for exaltation to the heavenlies, for the complete following after God, and for the final glory in victory over all foes. "I in you" for sanctification, for the energy of a new life, and for the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

In the Rev. John Urquhart's recent book "How to read the Bible," he has shown that there is a little link that unites the Old Testament books together in a divine arrangement, the philosophy of which he has endeavored to show. The smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, except one, is the letter known as "Vav," commonly translated

## Spiritual Structure

“and.” It is shaped like a hook, and it hooks on one book to another, in the Old Testament, which God has joined together, and where it does not occur, it naturally implies that this intimate connection does not exist.

The Book of Exodus commences with that letter, translated “Now,” which should be translated “And,” as in Leviticus and Numbers. But Deuteronomy, which we should expect to be linked with the other four, lacks this connective “vav”; but Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I & II Samuel and I & II Kings, all begin with that letter. In I Chron. the first word is “Adam,” but in II Chron. the “And” reappears, as also in Ezra; Nehemiah and Esther being connected in the same way.

Mr. Urquhart, with his simple, childlike faith that there is a reason for everything God does, and that the smallest jot or tittle shall not pass without a reason, suggests that the reason Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers are thus associated together is because they are the books that appertain to Israel, *outside the Land*; that Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, I & II Samuel, and I and II Kings are associated with Israel, *inside the Land*; Chronicles and Ezra, joined because appertaining to returning captives; and Nehemiah and Esther, because they have to do with the captives that did *not*

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

return,—Nehemiah being an instance of those that in the land of captivity mourned over their exile, and Mordecai and Esther of those that were indifferent, and content not to return. Hence the name of God is not found in Esther; as Mr. Urquhart suggests because God would not couple His name with His people, when they were indifferent to His cause.

Thus there is a reason for the minutest things in holy scripture,—a reason why a “vav” connective should be used on one occasion and not on another; why God should hook together certain books, and leave out the hook where the books should be dissociated.

Again there must not only be this subordination of all the books to the great end that God has in view, and this unity of the lesser parts among themselves, but, as in an arch a keystone both completes the stones in the arch and holds all the rest in place, so the student will be able to find generally, if not always, in every book of the Bible, some one word which is a key to its entire contents. To stimulate studies in this direction, we suggest a few of these key words.

For instance, in the Epistle to the Romans, the key word is “Righteousness”; I & II Corinthians, “Separate”; (“come ye out from among them. and be ye separate”); in Galatians, “faith”; in

## Spiritual Structure

Ephesians, "heavenlies"; in Philippians, "gain"—worldly gain renounced, heavenly gain received in consequence of the renunciation; in Colossians "filled",—Christ was filled with God, and believers are filled in Christ; and so on, one may go through the whole of the New Testament. As already mentioned, the keynote to Hebrews is the word "better",—everything is shown to be better in the Christian dispensation than in the Jewish, and hence the argument: "You must not go back to Judaism, lest you forsake the better for the worse." I & II Peter, "Precious"—precious promises, precious blood of Christ, like precious faith, precious trial of faith; in the three epistles of John, especially the first, the great word that unlocks the entire epistle is "walk."

Three words interpret the whole of the Bible,—Life, Light and Love. They are the successive revelations of God; Life, the sum of all being; Light, the sum of all intellectual excellence; Love, the sum of all moral excellence. And if there is One in whom all being, all intellectual excellence, and all moral excellence are combined, there is nothing that can be added to such a portrait of God, and that is God's Own portrait of Himself.

It is not a matter of wonder that Luther took the 119th Psalm, verse 89, as his favourite text.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

He had it inscribed on the walls of his chamber, and embroidered on the garments of his servants: "For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven"—far above the reach of all disturbing causes. As well try to put out the stars with a watering-pot as to destroy the Bible by human assaults. It is the assailants who are going to perish, but they are not going to destroy this Book. Be afraid for yourselves, but do not be afraid for this Bible. There was a great man in America, now dead, who said once, after he had heard a sermon in which the speaker seemed to fear that all Truth was going to disappear before the assaults of infidels: "As well attempt to plant your shoulder against the burning wheel of the mid-day sun and roll it back behind the horizon!"

Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks. Consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide, even unto death.

## CHAPTER V

### SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

THE idea of a building also suggests PERFECT GROWTH.

For this reason the building better represents some facts about the Bible than the Body, for every organic body is, from its birth, complete, having all its parts. Growth in a body is only the development of the parts, which were there from the beginning; but growth in a building is the addition of part to part, from foundation to culmination:

In whom the whole building (unity), fitly framed together (harmony), groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord (growth).

This subject is vast, it has a vital and fundamental relation to successful Bible study, and deserves patient attention. There is scarcely any greater manifestation and demonstration of the inspiration of this Book of God, and of the fact that, behind the multitude of human writers and the multitude of human productions, there is the Divine hand and the Divine mind, than may be found in the study of this subject of Growth.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

We have before quoted from Benjamin Wills Newton, and now make another quotation from this spiritual and devout student of holy scripture:

The only unfailing method of interpreting scripture is the Structural method. Where do you first hear of any matter, and where the end of it? Then compare the beginning and the end, in order to get a firm grasp of the general character of all that intervenes.

The Book is thus a building, and the Author the Architect. To find the first mention of a matter is to find the corner-stone; to find the last is to reach the capstone. Then, by tracing the connection between the two, we discover the relation of pillars and arches and all that lies between.

Let us endeavour to get hold of this thought first of all, that we may understand what it means.

There are four things that are connected with this subject of Growth:

(1) The first and last mention of any subject in the Bible generally, if not always, hint what lies between.

(2) What lies between is generally, if not always, found to be fitly joined together, articulated.

(3) There is order and progress. Each new

## Spiritual Progress

mention adds to what has gone before, and prepares for what shall come after.

(4) This development proceeds in the Bible, as we have it, although the books are not always in chronological order. This is the more amazing fact, that such progress or development of doctrine exists, notwithstanding that chronological sequence in the canon is so often disregarded; and the only explanation we can give of it is that He who inspired the Word has guided in the compilation of the canon, permitting certain books to be admitted into it, with reference to such order in the presentation of truth, rather than with regard to the order of time in their production. As we come to study some examples of these remarkable facts, a problem faces us that it is very difficult to solve unless we believe that the Divine Author has taken oversight of the way in which the books of the Bible have been put together, though it has been done through human minds and hands.

First we take up only such developments as do not include either the whole of a Testament, or the whole of the Bible itself, leaving such for subsequent treatment. In order that we may get this thought thoroughly before us, the building, the form of which we shall keep before us, would

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

best be conceived as *pyramidal*—a form often suggested in the scripture. For instance, in Zech. iv: 7 we have that expression of God unto Zerubbabel:

Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace unto it.

The headstone here is construed as the last stone in the building, indicating its completeness, and the shout of “Grace, Grace unto it” as the triumphant shout of tribute to Grace when the building is thus completed.

In I Peter ii: 6-7, two words are used:

Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious . . .

The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.

The question arises whether the “corner-stone” in the 6th verse, and the stone which is the “head of the corner,” in the 7th verse, are the same. If one is the *corner*-stone, and the other the *cap*-stone, the structure must be conceived as a pyramid. Whether this be so or not, in this case, the figure of the pyramid is very suggestive and helpful in conveying the conception that we have in mind. In a pyramid, so important are the corner-stone and the capstone, that, from those two, we could

## Spiritual Progress

tell exactly what the pyramid was to be; because the corner-stone will indicate by its angles and shape what the size and shape of the pyramid must be which is erected upon it, and all the stones, between, must at once be in line with the corner-stone and with the capstone. Moreover, in any other building there may be a thousand pinnacles, as in the cathedral at Milan,—there may be spire upon spire—but in the pyramid there is only one headstone, which is itself a little pyramid; and there can be no rivalry, for there is only one stone that will fit the summit of a pyramid. If the sacred writer was guided by the Holy Spirit to use this figure of form, what a conception it conveys of the whole system of Salvation! He Who is its corner-stone is also its capstone. It is a sublime pyramid, “built upon the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner-stone, in whom the whole building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord.” And that Corner-stone and that Capstone determine the size, and the angle, and the position, of every other stone between.

This growth of truth has sometimes been called “Progress of Doctrine,” a phrase used to express the fact that there is an orderly progress of teaching in the holy scriptures.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Let the writer undertake to illustrate this subject, beginning at the beginning. If some things seem trite, commonplace and familiar, what is so to one may not always be to another, and a few examples from every department may at once illustrate and demonstrate the facts.

We begin with two examples of *Single Verses*:

Gal. v: 22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

When we first look at that, it seems as though it were like a cluster of nine grapes, without any reference to order whatever. We look again and see that there appear to be in the nine graces or virtues mentioned, three groups, each of them embracing three of the graces; that the first three seem to have special reference to God, "love, joy, peace," that concern our relation to Him; the next three seem to represent our relations to our fellow men, "long-suffering, gentleness, goodness"; the last three, "faith (or more properly 'fidelity') meekness, temperance (or self-control)" seem to have special reference to ourselves. Three having mainly the outlook Godward; three having mainly the outlook manward; and three having mainly the outlook selfward. It is the inverted order of:

## Spiritual Progress

"Soberly" (as to oneself), "righteously" (as to one's fellow men) and "Godly" (as to God).

### Titus ii: 11-13:

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (or, "the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, —hath had its epiphany") teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The word "Salvation" is used in the New Testament in *three* senses:

(1) The salvation that comes instantaneously: "To-day is salvation come to this house" (Luke xix: 9).

(2) The salvation which is progressive: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. ii: 12).

(3) The salvation which comes at the reappearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (I. Pet. i: 9).

Above we have the three salvations in their proper order:

(1) "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared."

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

(2) "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world."

(3) "Looking for the glorious appearing."

Notice again, we have here the entire contents of the New Testament suggested in the order that is found in these verses:

(1) The gospel narratives and the Acts of the Apostles: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared."

(2) The Epistles: "Teaching us," &c.

(3) The Apocalypse: "Looking for that blessed hope."

Is there not a regular progressive development of doctrine from beginning to end, and can the order of any phrases in these verses be changed without interrupting the progress of doctrine?

II. Let us pass on to *paragraphs*, including more than one verse, again choosing one or two examples only, and from the New Testament.

II. Pet. 1: 5-8:

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

## Spiritual Progress

How obvious the order here! Faith is the Christian's childhood. What is needed first is to add to childhood, manhood,—that is, virtue. We expect a man to know more than a child,—he is to add to virtue, knowledge. We expect a man to exercise self-control in pleasure,—that is temperance. We expect a man to exercise self-control in sorrow or pain—that is patience. A man grows from manhood to *maturity*—that is godliness. Godliness exercises its influence within the bounds of the *brotherhood*—that is brotherly kindness; then wields a wider influence in the larger circle of the world—that is *charity*. It would not do to change the order of any one of these; for example, putting patience before temperance, because pain is the later experience, patience the later development. Nor can godliness and virtue exchange places because manhood comes first, and maturity comes after. Charity follows brotherly kindness, because the circle of the brotherhood is narrower than the circle of the world.

Then, beyond all this there is an ultimate result:

For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful . . .

Here is character growing to maturity; here is

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

influence extending itself into larger and larger spheres; and here is *fruitfulness* as the final result.

Revelation xxii: 3-5: Here is both a remarkable classification, and an equally remarkable order:

“And there shall be no  
more curse” . . . Perfect Sinlessness.

“But the throne of God and  
of the Lamb shall be in  
it” . . . . . Perfect Government.

“And his servants shall  
serve him” . . . . . Perfect Service.

“And they shall see his  
face” . . . . . Perfect Communion.

“And his name shall be in  
their foreheads” . . . Perfect Possession.

“And there shall be no  
night there” . . . . . Perfect Blessedness.

“And they shall reign for  
ever and ever” . . . . . Perfect Glory.

And in that seven-fold enumeration of the final perfection of the Saints, you cannot change one item in the order. There must be perfect sinlessness before there can be undisputed rule. There must be perfect rule before there can be perfect obedience and service. There must be perfect obedience before there can be perfect communion.

## Spiritual Progress

There must be perfect communion before there can be perfect consecration. There must be all these before there can be perfect blessedness, and there must be all these before there can be perfect glory.

There is thus a regular, orderly progress of doctrine in these paragraphs.

III. We take illustrations from *chapters* or from *discourses*.

First of all, the so-called "Sermon on the Mount." Matt. v, vi and vii.

Most people who read this great discourse of our Lord's think it is a very happy combination of disjointed proverbs, but the accurate and careful student, day by day, perhaps after many readings, begins to discover a plan, and after he gets the key to the discourse, the plan becomes perfectly plain.

(1) First of all, there are eight specifications as to the character of a perfect citizen of the Kingdom, called the Beatitudes.

(2) Secondly, we have reference to influence, and it is represented in two or three ways: By the light that pervades the darkness; by the city that is visible from all points; by the salt that both savours and saves.

(3) Then our Lord begins to discourse on con-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

duct; first external conduct, which is outward righteousness; then unseen righteousness, which is righteousness of motive.

(4) Then He speaks of motives that are double and single,—motives that are directed Godward and manward at the same time, and in contrast to them the motives that are single, where the eye is simply set on God, and on God alone.

(5) Then He tells us what it is that interferes with this singleness of motive,—aiming for human applause on the one hand, and being troubled about our own support on the other.

(6) And He closes this sublime discourse by showing us what is real and unreal, what is transient and what permanent; and recommends us to dig deep, and lay the foundation on the Rock, so that when the ordeal comes, the building will not fall, but will stand.

All through that discourse, there is not a violation of orderly progress in teaching, from first to last: Character, influence, conduct, motive, double motive, single motive, the real and the unreal, the transient and the permanent; and so we advance from character to influence, and conduct to destiny.

In the other discourse in John xiv is a message to troubled souls. The first sentence is “Let not your heart be troubled,” and in verse 27 we have

## Spiritual Progress

exactly the same words repeated. Between these two, which constitute a refrain, dividing the discourse into sections, the reasons are given for not being troubled, and what are they?

There are four classes of problems referred to in order, and four remedies that are given to these problems.

(1) The problem of creation and Providence: "Believe in God."

(2) The problems of sin and salvation: "Believe in Me."

(3) The problems of death and the hereafter: "In My Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." And then

(4) The problems of the present interval, between conversion and the final gathering together in Christ,—problems of fear of sin, old habits of sin, Christ gone away, the unseen world shut out from us by the curtain of obscurity. And the answer to these problems is the Holy Spirit, Who becomes to us as the personal Christ, coming back and indwelling, and Who becomes to us also the secret of constant communion between the visible and invisible world, so that the joys of heaven are anticipated upon earth, and the power of God is realised over sinful habits; all our problems are thus answered, and the progress of thought is

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

perfectly preserved: (1) Creation and Providence; (2) sin and salvation; (3) death and the hereafter; (4) power of indwelling sin, present conduct, and communion with the unseen world. One may read that discourse a thousand times before he sees this; but once having seen it, can no more lose sight of it.

Another example is the Intercessory prayer in John xvii. We do not look for *system* in prayer. It is perhaps a mistake that we do not, and that praying is so often simply a jumbling together of sentences. There never was a discourse pronounced in the ears of man that pursued the progress of doctrine more than the intercessory prayer of Jesus Christ. There are four great divisions: (1) Separation: Disciples taken out of the world to be given to Christ; (2) Sanctification: "Sanctify them in Thy Truth; Thy Word is truth." (3) Unification: "That they all may be one." (4) Glorification: "And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them."

We cannot change that order. The separation, which is negative, must come before the sanctification, which is positive, and both must come before there is a possibility of the unity of disciples, for all true unity depends upon our closeness of relationship to Him; and all these must come

## Spiritual Progress

before we can enter into or enjoy His glory.

In Rev. II and III we have seven minor epistles to seven churches, and in the conclusion of each of these letters we have a reward promised to those who overcome. These rewards are couched in very peculiar language, in every case drawn from the history of the Children of Israel; but there is a progress in the order of these rewards, and again, you cannot in a single instance interrupt that progress.

(1) For instance, unto the Church of Ephesus the reward is:

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

That refers to Eden.

(2) The reward to the Church of Smyrna is "shall not be hurt of the second death."

That suggests the Fall, with the penalty of Death.

(3) The reward to the Church of Pergamos is the "hidden manna."

That reminds of the Children of Israel in the desert.

(4) To the Church of Thyatira:

To him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

That refers to Moses fighting with Amalek, and prevailing as long as the hand with the sacred rod was upheld.

(5) The promise to the Church of Sardis is "White Raiment," recalling the Priesthood, with their white garments, and the Levitical order in connection with the Tabernacle.

(6) To Philadelphia:

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.

That brings us to the era of the Temple.

(7) To the Laodicean Church:

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.

Here is progress again, for remember that although, when Solomon began to reign, he sat on David's throne, we have the account in I Kings x: 18, of how he made his own throne, magnificent as it was, and at that time (years after he had assumed the government,—reigning as it were jointly with his father), he ascended his own throne; and so there is a regular progress of doctrine here, and it cannot be disputed. These rewards traverse the whole of the history of God's people from Eden until the Hebrew nation reached the height of its prosperity and progress in the peaceful reign of

## Spiritual Progress

Solomon, the type of Jesus Christ, Prince of the Peace.

Some of the most triumphant answers to the errors of rationalistic modern criticism are to be found in this discovery of the progress of doctrine in the Word of God. It bears the seal and stamp of Divine inspiration, and the Mind of God, and, as we shall see when we examine Numerical Structure, this connection and progress of thought so pervades the scriptures as to take out of the mouths of rationalists some of the principle arguments against the Word of God.

IV. Having called attention to a few examples of single Verses, then of Paragraphs; then of Chapters or whole discourses, we now look at instances in which a *whole Book* presents a study of the Progress of Doctrine.

Take for instance the Gospel of John: In 1: 4 you have the first mention of *Life*: "In Him was life"; and in xx: 31 you have the last mention of Life: "These things are written . . . that believing, ye might have life through His name." Between the two, there are about fifty instances in which we find either the word "Life," or the expression "Eternal Life," and in every case *each new mention* adds something to the development of the thought that has gone before, and pre-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

pares for the after development of the conception in following verses.

"In Him was life." That tells the source from Whom life comes. This life is the gift of God. It is to be received as a gift by believing. It is to be received as a gift at once: "He that believeth hath." It is an inner spring, as in the 4th chapter. It is an outer stream, as in the 7th. It is both present and permanent, as in the 10th. And you see you cannot change the order of any of these great truths. They proceed by a regular progressive development, as from a corner-stone to a capstone.

In Acts 1: 8:

But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1: 8.

There the progress is indicated at the beginning, and is the order that is exactly followed all the way through the Acts: First, Jerusalem; then Judea; then (chapter viii) Samaria; (x) among the Romans, as in Cæsarea; (xix) among the Greeks, as in Ephesus; and so right out to the utmost parts of the earth,—a very familiar fact that every student of the Book of the Acts under-

## Spiritual Progress

stands. We cannot take any chapter, and change its place for that of any other without destroying and impairing this progressive teaching of the Book.

V. We look now at *groups of Books*. For instance, in the four Gospel narratives, the miracles of Jesus Christ have a progressive order.

The first of His miracles showed His power over nature, to do in an instant with the water in the waterpots (changing it into wine) what nature takes a whole season to do through the grape.

The second miracle demonstrates His power over disease.

The third, over animate nature, in the draught of fishes, as the first over inanimate nature.

The fourth, over demons.

The fifth, over death; and there is a progressive development in regard to the miracles concerning death,—three cases of resuscitation: (a) Jairus's daughter, that had just died; (b) the son of the Widow of Nain, that was on the way to burial; (c) Lazarus, who had been dead four days. Suppose the order of those miracles of resuscitation should be changed, how manifestly the progress of doctrine would be destroyed. If the raising of Lazarus came first, and the others afterwards,

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

the most stupendous miracle of raising the dead would come before the lesser ones which demonstrate Almighty power less forcibly.

When all the teachings of our Lord on the subject of Prayer are arranged in their chronological order, we find that they separate themselves into ten distinct lessons, advancing from the most primitive to the most sublime; for He says in regard to the last lesson—"Ye shall ask in My name"—that this is a new lesson. He hints that in no case about any of the other lessons, but, when He comes to put the capstone on all His own revelations on the subject of prayer, He says:

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. Jno. XVI: 24.

It was a new lesson to them, and to all believers.

These ten lessons on the subject of Prayer follow the order indicated below.

- (1) Secrecy, as opposed to display;
- (2) Quality of prayer, as opposed to quantity;
- (3) The matter and manner appropriate to prayer;
- (4) Forgiveness as opposed to vindictiveness;
- (5) Faith, as opposed to unbelief;
- (6) Importunity, as opposed to fainting;
- (7) The filial spirit in prayer, confidence in the Father;

## Spiritual Progress

- (8) Humility as opposed to pride; as shown in the case of the Pharisee and the Publican;
- (9) Agreement with other praying souls;
- (10) Identity with Jesus Christ: "Ask in My Name."

Again here is Progress of Doctrine. The first three regard the nature of prayer as an act of supplication; the next five refer to conditions of prayer as found in the spiritual attitude and condition of the suppliant; and the last two lessons have reference to the high level of prayer, found in a spiritual unity between suppliants who pray together, and a spiritual unity between suppliants and Jesus Christ when they ask in His name.

In the records of the life of our Lord there are manifestly groups of typical events: (1) His death, burial and resurrection; (2) His breathing of the Spirit on the Disciples on the night of His resurrection. "He Breathed on them." (3) His forty days' walk among them; (4) His ascension; (5) The compensation for His sufferings,—"the joy that was set before Him." (6) His sitting at the right hand of God. (7) His coming again in glory. No one will dispute this order of leading events.

There are also seven great church epistles which Paul wrote,—Romans to Thessalonians. Grouping together two Epistles which go to the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

same Church, we thus get a seven-fold group of epistles.

(1) Romans is occupied with death, burial and resurrection; (2) Corinthians with the Holy Ghost inbreathed as an indwelling life and power; (3) Galatians with the walk in the Spirit; (4) Ephesians with ascension to the heavenlies; (5) Philippians with the joy that is set before the disciple in compensation for his losses; (6) Colossians with his being seated with Christ at the right hand of God; and (7) Thessalonians with his coming again with Him in glory.

II Thessalonians was written first in the series, and yet it is one of the last two as the series is found in our Bible, yet the order must be as it is in the canon to secure a regular progress of doctrine. To change the order of any of these epistles is to interfere with the typical order of the events of our Lord's life; but, if we read consecutively from Romans to Thessalonians, we are conducted straight through all these great consecutive events. We follow the Lord in death, burial, resurrection; we receive the Holy Ghost from His inbreathing; we follow Him in forty days of Holy walk; we ascend with Him to the heavenlies; we participate in His compensation, the joy that was set before Him; we sit down

## Spiritual Progress

with Him at the right hand of the throne of God; and we look forward to the coming again with Him in glory.

## CHAPTER VI

### SPIRITUAL PROGRESS (*Continued*)

THE topic for present consideration is the “Progress of Doctrine” in the Old and New Testaments—one of the greatest of themes—and we must not dishonour the Word of God by a hasty and superficial glance at a matter which deserves the profoundest study.

In I Kings vi: 7, we read:

And the house (temple of God), when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building.

There must have been consummate planning and preparation in the building of the Temple. There were quarries round about Jerusalem and underneath the site of the Temple, and there were quarries in Tyre and Sidon, for some of the stones bear to-day the marks of the Tyrian workmen; the stones were brought from all quarters, and so also were the timbers of cedar and of olive and other wood; and, when brought to the Temple

## Spiritual Progress

site, there was nothing to do but to lift them to their places,—no chipping, trimming, adjusting, as though some blunders or some mistakes had been made in preparation. It was not necessary to use a hammer or axe or any iron tool in that whole process of building, but silently and noiselessly everything slipped into its appointed and predestined place.

We know no more fitting expression of the very thought we desire to bring before the reader (and for every thought that is worth bringing to men there is some expression in this Book) than we have read here. This Book is a Temple of Truth. Its stones and timbers have been prepared in many quarries and by many workmen; but, when they were brought to the place of the structure, they were lifted into their predestined and appointed place without any human adjustment whatever.

One of the most remarkable proofs of this is that to which already we have called attention—that these Books are not in the order of their composition; no regard being paid, in a large part of what we call “The Canon,” to the historical or chronological order in which these writings were produced under the pen of inspired men. Yet, notwithstanding this fact, the Bible as we have it, violating *chronological* order, pursues a *logical* order. There

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

is generally observable a steady progress in the development of truth from Genesis to Malachi, and from Matthew to Revelation. As we have already said, we know of but one satisfactory way to account for this, which is that God, who by His Spirit, first inspired men to write these books, then, by His Providence, in human history, controlled as far as needful the order in which they have been arranged in the canon. There is an order here that reveals a superintending Divine Hand. Human Councils are said to have settled the order of the canon. But they did no such thing. The utmost that councils of the Church have ever done has been to recognise the fact that certain books were fully *attested* as inspired books, and then to decree that they should be read and studied in the Churches; but they had already been *admitted*, in the vicinities where they were produced, or the Churches to which they were sent.

Another remarkable fact pertaining to this is that the circumstances which delayed the incorporation of certain books in the Canon, so that they came in comparatively late, were circumstances that no human being could control. Sometimes a book was disputed or doubted, because it was supposed to recognise or favour some heretical opinion which had sprung up in the Church, and

## Spiritual Progress

it took a while to clear the atmosphere, and to see that the book was not partisan, that it was not produced in the interest of any heretical opinion; as in the case of the slow acceptance of the Apocalypse into the canon. But be it remembered that the Apocalypse sets the natural and necessary capstone to the New Testament, and that it could in no case properly be anywhere else; and it will be seen why God permitted these controversies to arise with regard to this book, in order that its entrance into the New Testament should be delayed until it could thus become the completing capstone of the whole Bible.

These, then, are a few of the remarkable facts and features of the subject, which, like many others, demand close and careful attention, in order to leave the matter beyond a controversy or a reasonable doubt that this Bible is from beginning to end God's Book, and not man's book.

Having already searched somewhat into the Progress of Doctrine from one step to another in distinct sentences or verses; then in paragraphs; then in chapters; then in whole discourses covering several chapters; then in entire books; then in groups of books, like the four gospel narratives, we are prepared now to look at the Progress of Doctrine, where it covers still larger territory—

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

such as the whole of the Old Testament; then the whole of the New Testament; and then the whole Bible, Old and New Testaments together.

With regard to the Old Testament, it would seem that to trace the progress of doctrine here were a great undertaking. In fact, it has never been undertaken thoroughly. A book has been written by Oehler in which the development of doctrine in the Old Testament at its beginnings has been stated in part, but we know of no treatise covering the whole ground; and cannot but hope that someone will arise in these latter days who will do for the Old Testament the splendid work that Bernard did for the New Testament, in that book which is perhaps the greatest treatise, without exception, on this subject, "The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament: The Bampton Lectures for 1886."

Now as to the Old Testament: Here are thirty-nine books, often out of their chronological order, yet with a general Progress of Doctrine from beginning to end.

Look first of all at the Numerical progression in these books.

They are in three general divisions: (1) The Historical books, which are 17 in number, from Genesis to Esther; (2) The Poetical books, which are 5 in number, from Job to Solomon's Song;

## Spiritual Progress

(3) The prophetical books proper, which again are 17 in number, from Isaiah to Malachi.

Then, is it not very noticeable that the first 17 should be divided into 5 and 12?—the 5 major historical books from Genesis to Deuteronomy, and the 12 minor historical books from Joshua to Esther; and that the last 17 should be divided in the same way into 5 and 12,—5 major prophecies and 12 minor prophecies. That alone is very singular and striking. Here we find proportions like those of a building, in which we can trace, in the different parts, the same general mathematical laws of proportion and geometrical lines of construction. This, however trifling a thing in comparison, since it concerns only numbers, is only an introduction to that other progress of doctrine which no one can dispute who carefully looks at these books.

For instance, at the beginning stands Genesis, the book of the Beginnings: The beginning of creation, of man, of sin, and of salvation.

We should next expect to find, in Exodus, sin and salvation presented before us in a progressive way. And accordingly Exodus is the book of Separation. It is the calling out of God's people from the world into fellowship with Him.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Leviticus follows, and is the book of Fellowship, and of Service on the basis of sacrifice.

Then in the book of Numbers, we have the book of organisation and discipline and progress; but it is also the book of wanderings. Unbelief and idolatry enter into its records and so, when we come to

Deuteronomy, we naturally have a rehearsal of the Law, as becomes necessary when people have forgotten their obligations to God, and their relationships to Him; and this again is the preparation for

Joshua, which is the book of entrance, of occupation, of possession of Canaan by dispossession of the tribes that dwelt there. But before we get through Joshua we see signs again of a moral and political declension, and the book of

Judges, which follows, is the book of failure and of anarchy, when “every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” All this prepares us for the six books that follow:

I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, and I and II Chronicles; and what are they but the story of how the Theocracy or government of God, was displaced by the Monarchy, or government of man,—God crowded out from control because the people lusted for a human king; and the kingdom

## Spiritual Progress

develops, and declines, and divides, and then comes the captivity.

Then follow the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther:

Ezra is the story of captives coming back to build the Temple.

Nehemiah is the story of captives coming back to build the City.

Esther is the story of captives still in the land of the captivity, with apparently little yearning towards the sacred city and the House of God.

Esther is also the exhibition of God's Providence in national history, setting forth that providence in a seven-fold light, which we cannot now stop to examine. Suffice it to add that the general idea of the book is that there is a *Hidden Hand* behind human history. It shows us good men in adversity for the time, but their adversity ending in prosperity; and it shows us evil men in prosperity for a time, but their prosperity ending in judgment. It shows us that the Hand that guides human history is a hidden hand, and does not appear on the surface of things, but, as in the case of the sleeplessness of the king, works down beneath all the machinations of men for the development of God's own plan.

In Job, the first of the poetical books, we have

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Divine Providence in individual life, as in Esther,  
Divine Providence in national life.

Then follows the Book of Psalms, the unique book that, for the first and only time in the Old Testament, represents man as speaking to God; the other books are rather God speaking to men. All through the 150 Psalms we have these varieties of human experience finding expression and relief in communication with Almighty God.

When we come to the book of Proverbs, we have the wisdom of this world, at its highest, collated and compared to show that it tends towards God; that when we have found real wisdom—not sham wisdom—its highest verdict leads upwards to Him, that is, wisdom coincides in its ultimate verdict with the teaching of holy scripture.

Then, in the book of Ecclesiastes, as we have had the world's verdict in Proverbs, we have its *vanity* here.

The book of Solomon's Song, or the Canticles, exhibits the world's *hostility* to the believer. Let us tarry here, for this is one of the most misunderstood books in the Bible. Solomon has been taken to represent Jesus Christ, and Shulamith, the maiden, to represent the believer; and there have been various efforts made to reconcile some of the language of Solomon's Song with morality,

## Spiritual Progress

not to say spirituality. This can with difficulty be done upon the basis of such a construction of the poem; but there is a basis which Godet and others have pointed out, which absolutely explains that book and relieves all this difficulty. It is to represent by the maiden the believer or the Church; by the royal court of Solomon, the world; by the poor Shepherd to whom the maiden is affianced, but who is not yet in a condition to take her to himself as his betrothed wife, the Lord Jesus Christ during the period of His absence and withdrawal. And, as the royal court is seeking by voluptuous charms to win the maiden from the poor shepherd, and drag her into the harem of the polygamous king, but she has visions of the shepherd, in which he appears, reproaching her, and reminding her of her nuptial vow, so that she ends by going faithfully after the shepherd, and leaving the attractions of the harem,—so the believer, though vacillating between the world and God, is held fast in the embrace of His love, and finally ends by bidding adieu to the world's attractions, and turning to the Lord Jesus Christ. So construed, those expressions in Solomon's Song that are offensive, because they seem to appeal to bad passions, it is not necessary to "spiritualise" in some mysterious and unnatural way, to interpret

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

them, if possible, into pure yearnings of the believer toward the Lord. They become rather the diabolical and damnable efforts of a corrupt, lascivious world to draw the believer away from the pure loyalty to Jesus Christ as the Bridegroom of the church; and all expressions of enraptured admiration, and enthusiastic adoration of that which is true and good, come to represent the true attitude of the believer when, thinking of his Master and Saviour, the power of the world ceases to attract and he feels the magnetic drawing of the love of the Lord.

The 17 Prophetic books follow. There is, no doubt, a concealed progress of doctrine in them all, but it is very noticeable in the 5 major prophecies, *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Lamentations*, *Ezekiel*, and *Daniel*.

In *Isaiah*, for instance, we have the Messiah represented as God's suffering Servant, and man's vicarious Saviour; but when we come to

*Daniel*, we have that same Messiah represented as a conquering Sovereign of this world; no longer the Victim led to the slaughter, but the Victor achieving final conquest over the world, the flesh and the Devil. The beginning is where it ought to be, in the sufferings, and the end is where it ought to be, in the glory. And if we examine

## Spiritual Progress

closely the intermediate books of Jeremiah, Lamentations and Ezekiel, it will be seen that they are about equally divided between the lamentation over, and the rebuke of, the children of God in their disloyalty to Him; and the pronouncement of judgments, of "burdens" of doom, upon the various nations that have conspired against the Lord and against His Christ; these naturally belonging between the first glimpses of the Messiah as the suffering Servant and the last glimpses of the Messiah, in the major prophecies, as the final Victor.

It could be shown that, from Hosea to Malachi, there is somewhat the same progress of doctrine, from beginning to end, but such examination of these twelve books would require more extended treatment than is practicable in this volume.

We may, however, give a passing glance at the book of Malachi. Plainly that sets the key-stone of the arch to the Old Testament scriptures. In the last chapters we have the clearest references to the first Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ that are found in the Old Testament, with a glimpse even of the "Forerunner" that is to prepare the way before Him. And let us remember that the book of Malachi stands for the end of a *legal* dispensation. It is the closing book of the Old

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Testament, the great word of which is "Law"; and, as in the third of Genesis we meet the word "curse," so the last word of Malachi is the word "curse;" "Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." For disobedience to the law brings curse at first, and the law, even at the last, can leave behind nothing else.

What a suggestive contrast there is in the end of the New Testament: "The *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." We have gone from the curse to grace, and not only so, but we read: "And there shall be *no more curse*," and so the book of Revelation as obviously sets the key-stone in the arch of the New Testament as the book of Malachi does in the arch of the Old.

Before we advance any further, let us notice one thing: if we pass over into the New Testament territory, and compare the progress of doctrine, we find the most amazing correspondence in the order of events as they are portrayed there. In the early books we have a new *Genesis*, a new beginning. The second Man, the last Adam, appears on the stage of history, and, like the first Adam, is on a probation, and goes through with His temptation. How like *Genesis* that is!—but where Adam fell, He stood.

And now His work is to lead out a people for

## Spiritual Progress

God, and so the next thing that we meet in the New Testament is the Exodus, the new separation, the Ecclesia, the called-out disciples and the called-out Church; and just as in Exodus they passed under the blood-stained doorway, so in the New Testament they pass under the shelter of the blood-stained cross, and there is no entrance on the new pilgrimage except like the entrance on the old—by the way of the Blood.

Then we have set before us in the four gospels the new Leviticus, of fellowship and communion with God, on the basis of atoning sacrifice; then in the Acts, we have the new book of Numbers,—organisation and pilgrimage begun, and the new book of Deuteronomy, the new law, not of concentration now, but of dispersion, of self-sacrifice,—a new law of love.

The Acts of the Apostles corresponds also to Joshua—entrance, occupation, possession of this world in the name of Jesus Christ; but, alas, it also suggests a new period of Judges, for we do not close the Acts of the Apostles before we find the declension and the failure of the Church already in progress. Heresy and iniquity are creeping in, and every man is seeking to do that which is right in his own eyes.

And so, as, in the Old Testament, we have the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

six books dealing with the kingdom, so in historical Christianity, we find Constantine merging the theocracy into a human monarchy; then come the awful dark ages for a thousand years, and then, as in Ezra and Nehemiah, there comes the great Reformation in England and Switzerland and Germany, and a few anointed men of God seek to rebuild His temple, and to dig up from the debris of the ages the very doctrines of Justification by Faith, and kindred truths. But just as in Esther you find some captives still remaining in the land of their captivity, you find a very large proportion of nominal Christians still hugging their idols, and content in their captivity to the world.

Thus in the Old Testament and in the New; in the history of Israel and the history of the modern Church, we have almost side by side, step by step, the same development precisely; and we may lay one Testament over the other, and the history of the Church of God in our own times over the history of ancient Israel, and we shall find that, point by point, there is a coincidence,—alas, that there should be!

In the New Testament, examined by itself, there is a similar development of doctrine quite as manifest, perhaps even more so, because of the

## Spiritual Progress

smaller territory over which to trace this marvellous doctrinal growth.

Take for instance what are called the synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark and Luke.

How plainly Matthew belongs at the beginning, and could be nowhere else; for Matthew treats the Messiahship, and the Royal Law-giving Power of the Messiah. Matthew has also to do with Christ as the fulfilment of prophecy; hence it belongs at the beginning to join New Testament scriptures with Old. It begins with the preparation for Christ's coming in John the Baptist, and the opening of Christ's marvellous ministry, linking the New Testament directly on to the Old, Malachi and Matthew being specially joined. He is addressing the Hebrew mind.

Then Mark, who is the companion of Peter, and addresses the Roman mind, deals especially with Christ as the mighty Worker. The word of Mark is "straightway"; he emphasises the immediateness of movement and of power as exerted on the part of Christ.

Then Luke, who was especially the companion of Paul, and particularly addresses the Greek mind, deals with the perfect Humanity of Jesus Christ, the Friend of sinners, the sympathising Man, Who could say "I am a Man, and nothing that

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

is human is foreign to me" in a far greater sense than an old Roman said it many centuries ago.

Then follows the gospel according to John. The separate position which the writings of John occupy in the New Testament, demands special consideration, hereafter, for it is a most remarkable thing that this last of the Gospel narratives, separated in time and separated in character from the rest, had a particular office to perform, after the period of decline had begun in the Church, and had so rapidly matured that, in one year,—the time between the writing of I Timothy and II Timothy,—most alarming developments of apostacy had taken place; and so, John undertakes to supplement the synoptic gospels with a special gospel narrative, in which he deals with the Deity (not simply Divinity) of Jesus Christ. He addresses the Church, the great body of believers, and writes the gospel narrative in fact for the whole world.

In the Acts of the Apostles the same progress is noticeable as in the gospels,—first, the Gospel preached to Hebrews in Jerusalem and Judea; then to the Romans as Mark addresses the Romans; then to Greeks, as Luke addresses the Greeks. Some would say there cannot be any further progress of doctrine after our Lord ascended. But that is a great mistake, for it forgets the

## Spiritual Progress

fact that our Lord Himself said, in John xvi:

"I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I unto you that He shall take of Mine and show it unto you."

How wonderfully we are let into the secrets of the Word of God by that very Word itself. What does our Lord say? "There are things to be said unto you as disciples, that you are not now able to bear; for their disclosure you must wait until the Holy Spirit comes." But observe He does not say He did not know those things, Himself. He does not say He was not able to teach them those things, had they been prepared, for all that the Holy Spirit shall afterward reveal to them he declares is already "Mine" and "all that the Father hath is Mine," and therefore "whatever He shall show to you is only what I possess already in My own knowledge and capacity to teach." And so, when we come to the latter part of the New Testament we shall find that, as in the gospel narratives "*Jesus began* both to do and to teach", (which is the language of Luke), so in the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles He *continues* to do and teach, until the Canon of the Bible is completed,

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

and nothing more is to be added, and nothing to be taken from it.

Notice again what is the *philosophy* of this progress of doctrine, after our Lord ascended. Observe two things: First, that what He spoke *in germ* should be *expanded in fuller treatment*; and second, that that which He *could not disclose* to the disciples, because they were not ready to bear it, should, under the illumination of the Spirit, be made plain to them after the wondrous Pentecostal bestowment.

There is therefore this very remarkable feature, which Mr. Bernard has so grandly brought out in his book: Whatever you find taught by Paul, Peter, James and John *fully*, you can trace back to the teaching of Jesus Christ, *germinally*. This deserves emphasis because, as has been said before, all this talk about the “types of doctrine” in the New Testament as belonging to human schools—the Pauline and Johannean and Jacobite schools—is a misleading device of the Devil. If such were the case, then the reader of the New Testament scriptures could make his choice as to what type he would select—whether to follow the teaching of Paul, or Peter, or James, or of John. And there is a good deal of talk nowadays about going “Back to Christ,” which sounds very plausible, and is

## Spiritual Progress

exceedingly popular, but what does it imply? That *in so far as we follow Paul, or Peter, James, or John*, we are *getting away from Jesus Christ*. That is what it practically means. But it is a mistake. There is not a single great doctrine announced by Paul or Peter, or any of the rest of them, but is already found, in germ, in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Take a few examples and compare:—

Atonement: "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree," says Peter. What does Christ say?

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, shall draw all Men unto Me. This He said signifying by what death He should die.

Justification, by Faith:

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent. He that believeth is not condemned, but He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Liberty:

Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ shall make you free.

If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

There is an obnoxious doctrine which Paul

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

brings out strongly, about “election” and “pre-destination.” But what does our Lord say?

No man can come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me, draw him. John vi.

Ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. (x: 26.)

Can the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints which Paul teaches in Romans VIII be found in Christ’s teaching?

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand.

If believers are held between the hand of Jesus Christ and the hand of the Father, how is even the Devil going to pluck them out?

It is very true that there are some doctrines in the Word of God that are more *clearly* and *fully* stated in the Epistles than by our Lord Jesus-Christ and some of them are scarcely found even in germ in his teaching, but the reason is that they could not be understood until Christ had gone and the Spirit had come. Take, for instance, the doctrine of Forgiveness of Sins and its basis. Christ makes God’s forgiveness largely conditional upon our forgiveness:

## Spiritual Progress

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.  
(Matt. vi: 14-15.)

But, when we come into the later portions of the New Testament, we find that forgiveness is made to rest ultimately upon the atoning work of Christ. This phase of the truth could not be understood until the atoning work of Christ had been fulfilled.

Again, the doctrine of the Presidency and Administration of the Holy Spirit, in the Church, could not be understood until the Church was formed on the day of Pentecost, and the Holy Ghost became the indwelling and inworking Spirit.

The idea of victory over sin through the power of the indwelling Spirit of Life could not be understood until the Holy Spirit, taking His place in the believer, exercised His life-giving energy to displace the former spirit of evil.

And so with regard to the Holy Spirit in prayer. Our Lord emphasises praying *in His name*, but He says nothing, or very little, about the necessity of our praying in the Holy Ghost, for praying in the Holy Ghost could not be understood until the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Holy Ghost became the new element which is in us, and we in Him.

Likewise such doctrines as those about the Anti-Christ and the Millennial reign, and the Judgment Seat of Christ and its relation to the Great White Throne,—these waited to be taught the Church when the Holy Spirit Himself came to fill believers with His light and His love, and to take of the things of Christ, to magnify Christ, to glorify Christ, to irradiate His Divine Person with a new halo which never could have been seen or recognised until the Holy Ghost glorified it.

There is a progress of doctrine in the whole of the Word of God. When we study this book, we seem to be following the perimeter of a golden ring. We start in Genesis with Eden and the Tree of Life, and God walking with man and talking with man, and the river watering the garden; and then sin comes, and the curse. We come round in the end to Paradise in the last of the Revelation, and there is the same Tree of Life, there is “the River of the Water of Life clear as crystal,” there is the tabernacle of God with men, and there shall be no more curse. Thus, when we have gone from Eden to Paradise, we meet again the Tree of Life, and another greater River of God; again the Tabernacle of God, but no more

## Spiritual Progress

curse. It was a Garden then, it is a City now. It was a Garden into which sin might enter; it is a City into which nothing enters that defiles or works abomination or makes a lie.

## CHAPTER VII

### SPIRITUAL PROGRESS (*Continued*)

REFERENCE has been made to the supplementary character of the Gospel according to John. This is another of the conspicuous evidences of a Divine Hand in the structure of the New Testament. Judging by the probable approximate dates of the different books in the New Testament, the Church appears to have continued in its primitive simplicity until about the year 65 or 66 A. D. Up to that time Bishops or Elders and Deacons were the recognised official heads of the Church's administration, with the Holy Ghost always supremely recognised as behind any visible human leader. In about one year, 65-66 or thereabouts, there took place an amazing decline, the beginnings of what has since been developing into apostacy. If the first and second epistles to Timothy be compared, and then we read Second Peter and Jude, it will appear that, within a year or two, this apostate condition had an alarming development. There were various signs of this declension. The Holy Spirit was crowded

## Spiritual Progress

out from His unquestioned administration in the Church, and human leaders were elevated into undue prominence. Men began to be ambitious, so that like Diotrephes, they even refused to receive the Apostle John himself, as he tells us in his third epistle. There began to be church factions and schisms and divisions into sects. Heresies began to creep in, in doctrine, especially about the Person of Jesus Christ, and about the believer's judicial standing. Legalism invaded the church, so that believers were in fear of the judgment, although we are distinctly told that the believer shall not enter into the judgment of the Great Day. Then began also various iniquitous practices, especially those that hid behind antinomianism, or the abolition of all law with regard to the child of God. There were perversions even of the Lord's Supper, such as are hinted at in the first epistle to the Corinthians. Satan came into the Church to introduce his lawlessness in opposition to the truth, and the spirit of hatred in opposition to love, and the Anti-Christ spirit began to appear, as John tells us in his first epistle, manifesting itself even in the Church.

The moment we understand this fact—that, from the time when Jude wrote his epistle, about 70 A.D. till the time when the Gospel of John and the Reve-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

lation were written, about twenty-five years passed without one inspired book being added to the Canon; and that then John's writings came, in the shape of the Gospel and the Book of the Revelation, to supplement the synoptic gospels and to meet this new condition of things in the Church,—this will explain largely what it means that, in his Gospel narrative, there is no direct reference to the Lord's supper, and that he does not get any further than the Paschal Supper which preceded that; and it will also account for the fact that we find so much in his narrative that we do not find prominently in the others, the great doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the Deity of Jesus Christ, the Unity of all Believers as in chapter xvii, etc. These and other things John emphasises because of the particular condition of the Church when he wrote his gospel narrative.

We come now to our present subject, which is the Progress of Doctrine in the two Testaments, *taken together*, and here we are simply embarrassed by the riches of the theme.

We pass by with a simple mention the obvious connection between the words "Law" and "Grace," the Old Testament specially exhibiting Law, and the New Testament, Grace; and the Law preparing for Grace, and becoming the schoolmaster to

## Spiritual Progress

lead the Child of God to the teachings of Christ.

We also pass by the difference between Old Testament and New Testament Rewards, the Old Testament specially emphasising temporal rewards, and the New, eternal rewards; or, the Old Testament material rewards, and the New, spiritual compensations; the blessing of the Old Testament being prosperity, and the blessing of the New Testament adversity,—a very marked distinction in the general drift of the two Testaments; and obviously we cannot change the order here, for we ascend from the inferior to the superior, from the material to the spiritual.

But a word should be added with regard to the progressive unfolding of the *idea of God*,—for very noteworthy it is.

The first conception that we have of God is *in His works*, manifested in *Creation*, but especially, of course, His natural attributes, because His moral attributes are not revealed in Creation, to any extent. We could not infer God's love or grace, or forgiveness, from nature. We might infer His power and wisdom, and to some extent His goodness, though there are many things in the natural world that would seem to argue that some malevolent power is at work, if we had no other revelation.

The second revelation of God is in His *Word*.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

The third is God in His *Son Jesus Christ*, Who specially reveals to us the *grace* of God. The emphasis of the Old Testament scripture is particularly upon His righteousness, truth, justice, holiness, but when we come into the New Testament, the special revelation through Christ is the revelation of grace.

The final revelation is that through the *Spirit*, which transcends all the others, even the revelation in the Person of Jesus Christ, because the Holy Spirit so glorifies Christ, and magnifies Christ, that it is a greater thing to know Christ by the Spirit than it was to know Him in the flesh, as Paul teaches in II. Cor. v. And moreover, this last revelation of God is an inward revelation in the believer's own spiritual life.

Here again it would not do to change the order. To attempt to make any alteration in it is to lose the progress of doctrine entirely.

Then again, there are the successive revelations of God's *Temple*.

First, the Universe itself, as in Psalm xxix, which is the Psalm of the Universal Temple, in which, as we are told in verse 7, "every whit shouts glory to God,"—not every "*person*," but every whit of creation.

Then the second "*Temple*" is that tabernacle

## Spiritual Progress

built in the desert, and the permanent structure built by Solomon on Moriah.

The third is the Temple of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself,—“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up.”

The fourth is the temple of the *believer*, as is revealed to us in I. Cor. ii and iii, and vi, and II Cor. vi.

And the last temple is the Temple which can only be expressed as being *God Himself*,—there is “no Temple” in the New Jerusalem, God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it; God Himself becoming a Temple in Whom the believer eternally dwells.

Here again is a clear progress of doctrine: Creation; a building erected by man; the incarnate Word; the believer in Jesus Christ individually, and the true Church collectively as the body of believers; and finally God Himself.

Notice, also, Dispensational Teaching—we introduce this word with some hesitation, because very few people study “dispensations”—but the word really means God’s method of dealing spiritually with the race; and attentive students of scripture have traced at least seven great periods which are called Dispensations, beginning with Adam, Noah, Abraham, and so on. It has been

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

said that there are seven features to every dispensation: (1) A new revelation, or greater light (2) Declension into Darkness; (3) Union between the believer and the world; (4) Gigantic worldly civilisation, brilliant and progressive and aggressive, but Godless; (5) Parallel development of good and evil, like tares and wheat; (6) Apostacy; and (7) A catastrophe of Judgment. These seven features may be traced in every one of the dispensational periods, from the time of Adam until now—another indication of a progress of doctrine, keeping pace with Historical development.

Notice again the *Legislation* of the Bible, and the progress of doctrine with regard to it. In the Old Testament we find certain principles that are laid down as the basis of all God's dealings with men. For instance, a Covenant relationship, which involves not only the individual, but the family, and in the original state of things, even the community. Then this covenant relationship is represented as being based on sacrifice; and third, as being expressed in worship; (4) as involving the consecration of time; (5) the consecration of substance, as represented in tithes, offerings and first fruits; (6) the dedication of offspring, as represented in the consecration of the first-born; (7) consecration of self, as repre-

## Spiritual Progress

sented in the burnt offering. When we follow these through scripture, they help to explain the whole fabric of the Word of God. Much in the New Testament finds its key in these principles, laid down in the early books of the Old Testament, only that a new spiritual meaning comes to invest them. Higher revelations of God come to us in the New Testament scriptures, which illumine the types of the Old; as, for instance, in the twelfth of Romans:

I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (more properly, "your spiritual service")."

Notice, also, the advance of the *Sabbatic Law*, the essential principles of which are just as important and just as binding to-day as they ever were, so that all trifling with God's Sabbath Law means damage to the individual, destruction to the family, declension to the Church, and ruin to the nation. Now what is the *essential* law of all Sabbath legislation? It is REST. It does not hang upon the *seventh day* observance but upon one day in seven, given to rest.

By the way, in a recent congress of Engineers from all parts of the world in Paris, France, one

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

of the decisions arrived at was that *machinery* will last much longer if it is used but six days out of the seven. That was not a decision rendered by any ecclesiastical tribunal or Believers' Conference, but a conference of Engineers, without reference to laws of God, but simply with regard to mechanical facts in the material world. And it has been found by investigation that millstones and grindstones which run seven days of the week explode by the effect of centrifugal force very much earlier than when they are run but six days a week. So that God has somehow impressed a Sabbath Law even upon *material nature*.

Now notice the growth of this Sabbath Law,—it is most instructive.

First we have it announced in Eden. Some say it belongs to "Mosaic Legislation," just as though the Sabbath Law did not *antecede* even sin, not to say, Moses. It is one of two things that come down to us from a sinless Eden, Marriage being the other, and these two should be sacredly guarded as the only relics we have of man's unfallen state.

Then there is the Sabbath of man, after the fall, and the one thing emphasised then was simply rest from physical labour for man and beast.

Advancing to the Mosaic system, so-called, we

## Spiritual Progress

find a *Festal Rest* there made conspicuous, a Rest in Sabbatic Festivals. Then a full Sabbatic System, involving not only the seventh day, but seventh week, month, year, seventh seven of years, and seventy times seven years—the grand jubilee.

In Isaiah LVIII, representing the “Prophets” as Moses, the “Law,” you have the *great transition* from the old Sabbath to the new:

If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words;

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord . . .

Here the emphasis is on a rest from *selfish pleasure*, from *self-seeking*, and even from the *thoughts and occupations which self-will suggests*. It is obviously the transition line. All the Levitical features have disappeared, and we have now the forecast of what may be called the spiritual features.

In the New Testament we have passed the transition stage, and have now Rest in Worship, even the Lord Himself going into the synagogue, and engaging in acts of worship “as His custom was.”

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

And finally we have the Rest of faith, in that remarkable passage, Heb. III: 7-IV: 11, the final interpretation of all preceding Sabbath types being found in the cessation "from our own works, as God did from His," and entering into the present rest which is given to faith, when we learn to depend upon the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the inworking of the Holy Ghost.

Something more deeply interesting than all we have thus far noticed, is the two progressive revelations in the Bible, first with regard to Satan, and second, with regard to the Lord Jesus Christ.

From every direction we reach the climax only in the Person, Work and Glory of the Immaculate Son of God.

The progressive teaching about Satan is to our mind one of the most remarkable features of the Bible. There are perhaps eight or ten great stages of development in the unfolding of the character of Satan. They run into each other, and yet there is some feature in each one of these stages that is particularly prominent.

For instance, in Genesis III, Satan appears as a *Liar*. "He was a liar from the beginning." Christ refers to that. He denied what God said, and he misled the human race by a lie.

Then we find him specially in the first two

## Spiritual Progress

chapters of Job, appearing as the *Accuser*; he is accusing man to God.

Then there is the revelation of him as a *Hinderer*, as in Zech. III: 2, where Joshua stood at the altar, and Satan was at his right hand to resist him. The word in the Hebrew corresponds very closely to the word used by Paul in I Thess. II: 18: "But Satan hindered us." Satan is a Hinderer.

Then in Matt. IV we have Satan as the *Arch Tempter*, trying his audacious and three-fold temptation on the Son of God.

Next we have him as the *Sifter*, the *Denier* and the *Betrayer*, as in Luke XXII: 31:

"Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

We have in that immediate connection his entering into Judas; becoming in one disciple the Denier of Christ, and in another the Betrayer of Christ.

In Acts V he appears in a comparatively new rôle:

Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

There he appears as the *Instigator of lies*, and the *Seducer of saints into Robbery of God*.

And last of all, we have him represented in

II Thess. as the *Instigator of all Lawlessness and Anarchy*, incarnated in the *Man of Sin*; as, again, in Revelation coming forth to conduct the last great persecution and war against Christ and the saints.

There is thus plainly a progressive revelation of the character of Satan; but what strikes us as very noticeable is that, in Eph. vi: 10-20, all these characteristics of Satan seemed to be referred to; and each of the pieces of armour in the Christian's panoply seems exactly adapted and intended to stand over against these different characteristics of Satan, and substantially in the order in which those characteristics are unfolded in the Word of God.

The girdle of *truth*, obviously to protect us against him as the *liar*. The breast-plate of righteousness, against him as the *accuser*. The sandals of alacrity, to leap over, or fly over obstacles, as the provision against him as the *hinderer*. The shield of faith, against him as the master *tempter*. The helmet of salvation, when he seeks to make us *deny* or *betray* the Lord. The sword of the Spirit, when he puts it into our hearts to *lie* to the Holy Ghost and *keep back* part of what belongs to God. And the prayerful and watchful frame which follows the rest, as our help when



# REVELATION

ROM CORINTHIAN EPH PHILEM THESS TIT PHILEM 1 COR 1 COR 2 COR

EPISTLES OF PAUL PETER JOHN  
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

MATTHEW

MARK

LUKE

JOHN

H J A O J M N H Z H Z M

LESS PROPHETS

S E E R S

P O E T S

JOSHUA JUDGES RUTH I SAM II SAM KING 1 KINGS 1 CHRON 2 CHRON EZRA NEHEMIAH ESTHER

HEBREW ANNALS

G E L N D

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## Spiritual Progress

he comes in the form of the subtle *Man of Sin*, to seduce if possible the very elect.

Such lines of study have been the means of confirming the faith of many in the inspiration of this Book, and assuring them beyond a doubt that God is behind it from beginning to end, until no more doubt remains than of their own existence. It is possible thus to pass beyond the point of questioning on this subject, and by the grace of God be prepared to help others to pass likewise into the realm of assured certainty.

The progressive revelations with regard to our Lord Jesus Christ are even more engrossing: First, as the Second Man and the last Adam, and finally as the Lamb of God. Nothing impresses us more with regard to the progress of doctrine in the Word of God than this.

Gen. iii: 15, first of all, The Seed of the woman prophesied as to bruise the head of the serpent.

Then II. Sam. vii, which, properly interpreted, marks a most important stage in the development of this truth. The Prophet Nathan came to David and said, when David wanted to build God a Temple and God would not allow him to do it because he had been a man of blood (vii: 2):

And the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever.

Now if this referred to *Solomon*, it was not fulfilled. If it refers to Jesus Christ, the language "if he commit iniquity" seems highly out of place. And yet there seems to be more than a reference to Solomon here, for we are told a little further on that David went in and sat before the Lord, as in holy meditation, and said:

Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?

There must have been something that made a

## Spiritual Progress

tremendous impression upon David. This seems to have been one of the occasions when David rejoiced, foreseeing the day of Christ, like Abraham before him.

Bishop Horsley contends that the passage should be rendered: "*If iniquity be laid upon him,*" committed *to* him, as a vicarious sufferer, not committed *by* him. And he also thinks that the 19th verse should read: "And is this *the decree of the Second Adam*, O Lord God?" As if David got a forecast of a future Seed that was to spring out of his bowels, and who was to reign for ever and ever, and that this was the "house" that God was "building for him" that should never fail.

As we follow this remarkable development further, we come to the 8th Psalm:—"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" We learn in Heb. 11 that this refers to Jesus Christ; that it was not realised in Adam, but is realised in the Second Man, the Last Adam.

Then in Isaiah LIII we have Him represented to us as the *Progenitor of a seed of believers*: "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

Then in Romans v we have him as the *Representative of those who died without moral responsibility*, like infant children, not having

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

committed sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression,—they all enter heaven through the blood of Jesus Christ; His atonement is absolutely applied to them, without the necessity for faith.

In I Cor. xv we have Him represented as *Lord over death and the grave*.

In Ephesians and Colossians as the *New Man* that in us triumphs over the power of sin.

In Hebrews ii we have Him as the great *Representative Adam*, coming down to man's level, taking man's nature, suffering man's temptations, tasting death on behalf of man, and overcoming man's mortal enemy, paying man's death penalty, and restoring man's sceptre.

And in Revelation xxi and xxii He is the *Final Restorer*, under Whose power all things are made new.

What obvious progress of doctrine! (1) The revelation of another seed of the woman. (2) Of a human king, reigning over all the earth. (3) Of One Whose sceptre is over the whole visible creation (in Psalm viii). (4) Of One who is Parent of a special seed, begotten by His agonies. (5) Of One Who is Representative even of unborn children who will die in infancy, without moral responsibility having been assumed by voluntary

## Spiritual Progress

moral action. (6) The Destroyer of death and the grave. (7) The Destroyer of spiritual death, the Imparter of life-giving power in the new man. (8) The seven-fold Representative, covering the whole ground of man's sin, temptation, death and disaster. (9) And finally as the seven-fold Restorer, making all things new.

Again, we cannot change this order in any case. It would be to put these items out of their normal position in the Word of God and the progress of truth. And yet what a magnificent development of thought there is from the first to the last!\*

Once more let us compare the development of doctrine in both Testaments, as seen in regard to *the Lamb of God*.

Here is a steady progress, without a single check or break from Genesis iv to Rev. xxii, about the Lamb. Every new stage of treatment adds something to what has gone before, and that has not been before mentioned, which prepares for something that is coming after, that otherwise we are not ready to understand.

\*Speaking of Christ as the Representative of unborn children, we give once more that remarkable epitaph in St. Andrews to comfort many who have buried little infant children:

Bold Infidelity, turn pale and die.  
Beneath this stone four infants' ashes lie;  
Say, are they lost or saved?  
If death's by sin, they've sinned, for they are here;  
If heaven's by works, in heaven they can't appear.  
Reason! Oh, how depraved!  
Turn to the Bible's sacred page, the knot's untied,—  
They died, for Adam sinned; they live, for Jesus died.  
(COLE RIDGE.)

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

In Genesis iv, when Abel brought his lamb to the altar, we are not even told that it was *slain*. It was slain, and undoubtedly burnt, but it is not so stated. He brought of the firstlings of his flock, and the Lord accepted the offering. That is all we know about it—simply the fact that a lamb was brought in the spirit of faith, and was accepted by the Lord.

But when we come to the 22nd chapter of Genesis, we have a strange intimation that probably Abraham himself did not understand:

God Himself will *provide a lamb* for a burnt-offering.

Abel brought his own lamb; God is going to provide *His Lamb* in a very mysterious way.

In Exodus xii the great emphasis is upon the fact that the lamb was *slain*, and the *blood was sprinkled* on the side posts and the upper door posts. For the first time now the emphasis is upon the *death and sprinkled blood*.

In Leviticus xvi we have *two kids*, and *kids* are always the equivalents of *lambs*, in sacrifice. One kid dies, the other lives, and this seems to express *two aspects* of Christ's work in turn: what He does as a dying Saviour; what He does as a living Saviour.

Then we come to the 53rd chapter of Isaiah,

## Spiritual Progress

and there we have a *Person* as the lamb slain for the salvation of God's people. It has not been distinctly stated before, but it is emphatically stated there.

In John 1: 29 and 33, is the first distinct revelation that this personal Lamb of God is Jesus:

Behold the Lamb of God, which beareth away the sin of the world.

Here for the first time the Lamb of the Old Testament sacrifices is identified with Him.

Then in Acts viii., Philip, discoursing with the eunuch, for the first time distinctly declares that the *Lamb, prophesied by Isaiah*, is the *Jesus Who died on Calvary*. In John the historic Messiah is the Lamb of God, but in the *Acts* the *prophesied Messiah* is the Jesus of Calvary.

I Peter 1: 18-21, gathers up all the loose threads and winds them in one:

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot:

Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

Who by him do believe in God, that raised him

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Here is an immense advance over anything that has been taught before: (1) The *foreordination* of Christ to be the Lamb of God. (2) The *historic manifestation* of Christ as the Lamb of God; (3) The fact that to Christ we owe the *fact of faith in God*; (4)—and for the first time—the *resurrection of the slain Lamb* is referred to; hitherto it has been death, now it is resurrection.

“. . . who raised him up from the dead”—glorification,

“. . . and gave him glory.”

“. . . . that your faith and hope might be in God.”

Before this, it is especially *faith* in Jesus Christ; now it is *hope* in His resurrection and His glory,—a very distinct advance in doctrine.

When we reach Revelation v, we find the *Lamb* of God absolutely identical with the *Lion* of the tribe of Judah. The Lion of Judah, and the Lamb of God are one and the same. God’s Lion is a Lamb, and God’s Lamb is a Lion. As a Lion-King He has the right and power to make *kings*. As a slain but risen Lamb—sacrificial priest and victim at once—He has power to make *priests*; and so to Him is attributed the power to solve the

## Spiritual Progress

mysteries of the sacred Book, and unloose its seven seals; and ascriptions of glory are made to Him Who makes us kings and priests unto God and the Father. That is obviously new teaching in connection with the Lamb of God.

Last of all, when we come to Revelation xxI and xxII, we find that the Lamb, that was typified on Abel's altar; forecast as provided by God at Abraham's altar; slain and His blood sprinkled in the Paschal ceremonies; living and yet dying, dying and yet living, in the ceremonies of the great Day of Atonement; the sacrificial substitute in Isaiah LIII—the Lamb of the Mosaic Ritual identified as Jesus in John i; identified as the subject of Isaiah prophecies, in Acts viii; represented as foreordained, manifested, slain, risen and glorified, by Peter; as the Interpreter of the Book, and the Lion and the Lamb united, in Revelation v;—in Rev. xxI, xxII, seen to be the centre of the glory of heaven, the light of it and the temple of it and the throne of it, so that none can enter whose names are not in His Book of Life. Glory to the Lamb that was slain! To Him be all honour, and power, and dominion, and might, with our God and Father, for ever and ever!

## CHAPTER VIII

### SPIRITUAL SYMMETRY

WE now take up more fully the *numerical structure* of the Bible, or the mathematical plan that pervades the Word of God,—first as to numbers, and second as to geometrical forms, showing that behind this book there is a Master Mathematician and Geometer.

Let us take as a starting point a few verses in Isaiah XL: 12 and 26:

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of His might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.

The subject we are now approaching, although it may seem to some speculative and fanciful, is another important line of study that should be followed in connection with this Book of God. Few lines of proof, properly followed out, carry

## Spiritual Symmetry

more decided verification of the Divine Authorship of this Book.

In these two texts attention is called to *number in nature* and *symmetrical proportion*, as the evidences of *creative intelligence*.

God is manifested in creation. The very fact that there is a creation implies a Creator. The very marks of design imply designer. The forecast of coming needs that could not be anticipated by plant or animal indicate an Intelligence that makes provision; and there are many other things that indicate this Creator's hand. But, among all such evidences, none perhaps is greater than the proofs of a *mathematical Mind* in the Kingdom of Nature and in the universe of God. Among terrestrial objects as well as celestial objects we find this infallible numerical system prevailing, and it is well to get the mind fully occupied for a little time with this fact.

Many do not have time to study the natural sciences, and perhaps do not look into this universal system of numbers.

Take, for instance, the celestial worlds: The distances, the dimensions, the proportions, the times of revolution, are all adjusted in the planetary and the stellar worlds with the nicest possible mathematical exactness; so that, stretching the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

fibre of a spider's web across the centre of the object glass of a telescope, we can accurately calculate, to the fraction of a second, what time a given star in the firmament will cross that line. Kepler's Laws, among the greatest of astronomical discoveries, are all founded upon this most surprising mathematical system, which reveals a ratio between the proportions of the planets and their distances from the sun and the periods of revolution.

In the mineral realm, in the department of crystallization, we find squares, circles, triangles, all these with their corresponding solid forms, cubes, cylinders, pyramids and others, sometimes base to base,—exact angles, beautiful proportion, remarkable symmetry.

Then in the Vegetable realm we find a fixed number of stamens and of pistils in plants, and a remarkable recurrence of numbers, as of 1, 2, 3 and 5, in the spiral arrangement of leaves around the stem; that is to say, if we notice where one leaf bud is on the stem, and follow the spiral round the stem, we find that the second leaf is either on the first circuit of the spiral, or the second or fifth, so that botanists actually classify plants according to the intervals of the recurrence of the leaf bud on the circuit of the spiral.

## Spiritual Symmetry

Again in the animal realm. In the molluscs, how wonderful is the way in which the shells of shellfish are devised. Look at their shape, look at their lines, beautifully defined. Look at the radiata, as in the Star Fish, with its marvellous formation.

In the Vertebrata—the animals that have a backbone—how beautifully everything is proportioned! These bones have a fixed relation, have a fixed number, and that number is never violated in a perfect organism. Witness the five fingers on the hand, the five toes on the foot. What do these and similar facts mean but a numerical system?

In the department of Light, we use the prism to separate the rays of light, and we get what? *Seven colors*. In the science of Music, what do we find? *Seven notes* in the complete scale that we call the octave.

We shall see presently, what we now anticipate, that there is a remarkable correspondence between the numerical system of Nature and the numerical system of the Bible.

Where we find seven in nature, in certain conspicuous positions, it is *divided* into *4 and 3*, as on the keyboard of the piano in the octave of notes. There stand visibly 3 and there stand 4, and it

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

helps us to know how to strike the chords correctly, that the arrangement of three and four can never be got out of the mind when the keyboard is thought of, the recurrence of the 3 and the 4 being determined by the recurrence of the half tone or half note at certain intervals in the octave.

In the 7 colors of the spectrum 3 are primary, 4 are secondary. Yellow, blue and red are the *primary*; and from their combinations come the other colors of the spectrum.

Where we find 12 in the most conspicuous positions in the material world, there we find it as the *multiple of 3 and 4*. Take a triangle: It has 3 angles and 3 sides; and in the pyramid there are 4 sides in the quadrangular foundation, and 3 triangular sides at every elevation. In the cube we have 4 and 3 again,—length, and breadth and height, as we approach any side of the cube; and 4 sides from which to approach it,—4 and 3 again multiplied into each other.

So close is the numerical and geometrical correspondence between what is found in nature and in the Bible, that wherever we find 7 in conspicuous positions in the Bible, it is again the *sum of 4 and 3*, and where we find 12 it is the *multiple of 4 and 3*.

The possible bearing of all this is we are yet to

## Spiritual Symmetry

see, but for the present we are content thus to fortify confidence in this Book as something that is beyond human production; and afterward we shall seek in the concluding chapters to apply these matters to the spiritual life.

The point now is that in Nature we find the leading numbers, to which we have already referred,— $1, 2, 3, 4$  ( $4$  and  $3$  added together making  $7$ , multiplied together making  $12$ ), and their combinations. In Nature we find *four leading forms*, triangle, square, circle and spiral; and when we look at the solid forms, we find the pyramid and the cube, the sphere and the cone. And we shall find *exactly the same things* hinted in the Word of God. What does all this show? That, behind Nature, there is a Mind that measures, counts, weighs, strictly proportions, determines ratios, and constructs the universe on a definite mathematical principle, where numbers and forms are in His eye continually.

When you come to the Word of God, you will find exactly the *same facts* and laws to prevail,—the four numbers,  $1, 2, 3$  and  $4$ , with their combinations (the sum of  $4$  and  $3$  making  $7$ , their multiple making  $12$ ), the number  $10$ , which is the sum of  $1, 2, 3$  and  $4$ , and therefore suggests *time*, because it is the result of *successive additions*; and their

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

multiples 40 and 70 and 100 and 144 and 490 (7 times 70) and 1000 and 1260. All of these numbers prevail in the Word of God, and prevail at such points and in such connections as make it impossible that they should come there by chance.

It is not our province now to undertake to frame any adequate philosophy of the system of numbers and forms in the Bible, seeing we have no authoritative revelation as to the meaning of it; but each student must determine by his personal research what God intends shall be learned from it. It is important however to notice the existence of such numerical system itself.

For instance, the number one. One seems to stand very conspicuously in the Bible for the *unity* of *singularity* and *exclusion*. Where there can be only one, where the fact of there being one forbids that there should be more than one, one is very conspicuous.

Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one God.  
Deut. vi: 4.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.  
Ex. xx: 3.

One and only one. "This one thing I do" (Phil. iii: 13) one thing and one only. "Thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful." (Luke x: 41-42.) These ex-

## Spiritual Symmetry

amples will give an idea of how “one” is used,

Two is used either for combination or division; comparison or contrast; confirmation or opposition—as light and darkness, good and evil, love and hate,—two contrasted. Two agreeing, two combining, and confirming each other,—like two witnesses. “That in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established.” (Mat. xviii: 16.)

Three shows *combination for unity*, as in the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; Spirit, Water, Blood. This is a special number for Deity.

Four seems obviously the number of the *world*. The first time it occurs in a marked way is where Abraham separates from Lot, and God says to him:

Lift up now thine eyes and look . . . northward and southward and eastward and westward.  
Gen. xiii: 14.

And from that time on 4 is generally the number of this world—of material *space*.

Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain. Ezek. xxxvii: 9.

That is, the four points of the compass. The city of God (Rev. xxii), standing north, south, east and west, facing in a fourfold direction.

As has been already noted, in the conspicuous

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

places where we meet the number 7, it will be found to be divisible into 4 and 3.

We meet it first in the creation, where there are four of the days of creation given to the inanimate, and three to the animate.

Then we meet 7 in connection with the Lord's prayer; three petitions have to do with God, four with man.

Again, in the seven parables of the Kingdom, in Matthew XIII, four were spoken to the multitude and three privately to the disciples.

Then, again in the seven epistles in Rev. II and III, where at first no division between 4 and 3 is seen, we find that in four instances the reward follows the injunction: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches"; and in the other three cases the order is reversed.

Thus, the more carefully we study, the more certainly we find that, in conspicuous places where the number 7 recurs, the division into four and three is suggested, showing that seven stands in the Bible, not for 1 and 6, or 2 and 5, but for 3 and 4. There must be some reason, and, if 3 is the number of Trinity, and 4 the number of the world, we can understand why seven should represent completeness, because it represents God and man, united for some great end.

## Spiritual Symmetry

It is also remarkable that where we find 12 in the Bible, it usually is the multiple of 4 and 3. This is no mere fancy, but is confirmed by careful study of the Word of God. For example, the first time the breastplate is referred to (and this is curiously the twelfth time that the number 12 occurs in the holy scripture, Ex. xxviii: 16-20), it is very definite, plainly brought out as though there were a design in it, that it should represent 4 times 3:—

Four square it shall be . . . four rows of stones  
. . . four rows of three each.

Then in Numbers 11, where the arrangement of the tribal standards about the camp is shown, the camp is square, and the standards are ranged so that from every point of view there shall be three of the tribal standards confronting us—four sides, three standards belonging to each side. We cannot believe that all this is accidental. There must be some reason for it, and devout students of the Word of God, like Bishop Wordsworth, have suggested that 4 multiplied into 3 represents the *Divine interpenetrating the human*, and therefore it is the number of the tribes, because God came to dwell in the midst of men, and to permeate the whole camp with His presence; and hence 12 is also the number of the Apostles of the Lamb, be-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

cause Christ, dwelling with, and with His presence permeating the apostles, sent them to carry His gospel and Spirit into the midst of the world. If there is thus a spiritual significance in the numbers, we cannot afford to neglect the study of this numerical system.

*Geometrical* forms have something to do with the interpretation of scripture. Take, for instance, where the cube occurs so very markedly, as where Moses was bidden to set up the tabernacle,—particularly the holiest of all, which was to be ten cubits in every direction; and in fact the whole tabernacle was but as three cubes set up together, for in front of the holiest of all there was the holy place, which was 20 cubits long, 10 broad and 10 high, so that it was like setting up three cubes in a row.

When we come to the New Jerusalem, what do we find? The length, breadth and height of it are equal; it is still the absolutely perfect cube. Nothing can be added to it; nothing can be taken from it. From whichever way we approach it, from this or that side, or survey it from above, we find still the same uniform and perfect cubic symmetry. Nobody supposes that the City of God will be actually and literally 12,000 furlongs long and broad and high. These are

## Spiritual Symmetry

*typical* numbers. And the 144,000 of the sealed ones in Revelation may be likewise a typical number. 144 is the square of 12, and 1,000 is the cube of 10; 10 the number of time, 12 the number of space. When we look at that number typically it may represent the complete company of the sealed ones, as gathered from *all the ages*, and from *all parts of the globe*. If so, the number has a beautiful spiritual significance.

Without affirming this interpretation of numbers to be correct, we feel convinced that there is nothing in this Book that does not *mean something*; and that it is our privilege to study and prayerfully compare and investigate, if so be that, by such comparison of scripture with scripture, we learn that there is a Master Mathematician behind the Book, and that no man can account for these things by chance any more than he can so account for the world. As well take the letters of the Greek alphabet and fling them broadcast on the ground, expecting them by accident to form a sublime epic. Whether we look at this Book, or at Nature, we can say with the Psalmist that only "the Fool hath said in his heart there is no God" in creation; and so only the fool can say in his heart, there is no God in the Bible.

That God in history, as well as in nature, pro-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

ceeds upon mathematical principles, is more than hinted at in two or three conspicuous passages of scripture, for from the beginning we have sought to fortify every position taken by a reference to some conclusive word of God. Look in Numbers XIV: 34:

After the number of days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years; and ye shall know my breach of promise.

Forty days were spent in searching the land and when the children of Israel sympathised with the ten spies that gave the discouraging report as to entering the land; God says: You shall wander in these wilderness paths until the whole of the people shall perish in the wilderness—a year for a day—forty years.

Look at Leviticus XXVI: 34–35:

Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.

As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.

What does that mean? There were 490 years that elapsed from the time when Saul was clamoured for as a king to the time when the children of Israel

## Spiritual Symmetry

went into captivity. During these 490 years there would be 70 sabbatical years, one in each seven; and, because they had failed to keep the seventh years set apart as years of rest, God exacted 70 years in the captivity, during which the land should lie at rest and have the sabbaths that they would not give to God during those 490 years,—a numerical system even in His dealings with the sins of men. So that not only have we a God of number in nature and in scripture, but in history also.

When we come to know more about history, we shall find that the whole of sacred history may be divided into periods of 490 years; for example:

490 years from the time when they clamoured for a king to the time of the captivity. Then 70 years' captivity.

490 years from the time of the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem until the Messiah. Then 70 years from the birth of Christ to the fall of Jerusalem.

7 times 70, and 70; 7 times 70 and then 70 again. Has God no reference to number in His Word, His Works, and the events of History?

Why should it be stated to us that Enoch lived 365 years before his translation? It was the intention of God without doubt to present to us in Enoch

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

the pattern of a complete life. He "Walked with God." He started with God, and he came round in the end to the God with Whom he started. There are 365 days in the complete circle of a year, and therefore 365 naturally stands for a complete orbit, and 365 years stands for a complete life of grace, ending in glory.

It seems surprising that anyone can read the Bible, and not see a meaning in these things.

How often the number 40 occurs in the Bible. Has it no significance?

In the first place, 40 days and nights of the deluge. Then Moses' life, divided into three periods of 40 years each, 40 in Egypt, 40 in Midian, 40 in the wilderness. The three reigns of the kings, Saul, David and Solomon, each of them 40 years; Saul's reign being the type of the period of apostacy, David's the type of the militant period, Solomon's the type of the triumphant period of the Church, when the Prince of Peace shall reign.

There were 40 days of Elijah's journey to Horeb; 40 days of Christ's temptation, 40 days of Christ's walk in the Spirit after the resurrection and before the ascension. Have these things no significance? Then how comes it to pass that this number is so repeatedly put before us in

## Spiritual Symmetry

the Word of God as that we cannot read Old or New Testament without continually confronting it?

There is a booklet called "Number in Nature as Evidence of Creative Intelligence," by Mr. Edward White, which is very instructive. H. L. Hastings, of Boston, produced a book on the "Arithmetic of Nature," and Colonel Roberts has published also a little book called "A Double Portion." Without being yet prepared to verify the result of others' study, some suggestions made, for example by Colonel Roberts, are worth notice. He assumes that, when Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit, it was granted to him to perform twice as many miracles as are recorded as the miracles of Elijah, and counting up those of Elijah he finds 8, and those of Elisha 16. Then in the miraculous draught of fishes we have 153 fishes,—a remarkable fact that so odd a number should be distinctly noted by the Apostle John—but Colonel Roberts carefully examines, and makes a list of 153 individual instances of blessing through the miraculous works of Jesus Christ. Taking it for granted that Paul was a type of Elisha, he examines again, and finds recorded 306 cases of individuals blessed through the ministry of Paul.

There is a department of study here that no critic

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

so far has ever explored thoroughly. We are all only beginning to understand the numerical and geometrical system of nature, and are even farther off from understanding and comprehending the numerical system of the Bible. But to incite others who can perhaps carry this study much further than has been done, and reach much greater results, and to encourage more careful and prayerful study of this numerical system, we indicate what may possibly be some of the benefits of such study:

First, it may serve to identify the Creator of the Universe with the Divine Author of this Book; and to show that He Who counts and weighs and measures in a balance everything that is in this wonderful creation of His, weighs and numbers and proportions everything in this Book.

Second, it may show that the Mathematical Mind that is behind the Book cannot be the mathematical mind of the human writers. All of us have found the number 7 continually reappearing in the Bible. Sometimes where it is not *stated* as a number, if the reader makes a computation, he will find there are seven particulars—a concealed number. In I Thess. v, the seven Godly and spiritual frames are given; there is no expressed number 7, but there are seven things

## Spiritual Symmetry

enumerated, and we cannot add anything to them,—it is a complete presentation of the spiritual and seven-fold Godly frame. The Biblical bearing of all this is: Where there is a seven-fold enumeration; where, for instance, seven times only some prominent word appears in the New Testament,—we may have to trace it, not in one book, or even in the books of *one* author, but sometimes in the books of all the writers of the New Testament: that is, all these writings must be put together before we find the seven-fold use of a word or phrase. This would bind the whole Bible in one great system, and show God behind the human writers, who could not confer and agree that they would refer to some specific matter of great importance just so many times, God's mathematical mind and divine purpose being back of all human instruments.

What is meant by the “fulness of times” may be suggested by the 40 days’ searching of the land and the 40 years’ wandering in the wilderness, the 70 years and  $7 \times 70$  years. Possibly also this numerical system may be used to *verify the canon of the Bible*, showing that doubtful books that have been assailed, like the Gospel of John, must belong to the scripture to complete its numerical system. The late F. W. Grant was editing what he called the “Numerical Bible,” which reveals a marvellous

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

symmetry in God's Word. The author, an eminently spiritual man, traced, in the entire structure of the Bible, a numerical system which he found permeating all parts of Old and New Testaments alike, oftentimes determining the record as a verified record, and the canon as the accurate canon.

There is one use of a numerical system which may help in other departments. It has been a matter of some doubt whether Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. Was Paul the author, and does the epistle come down to us as the product of his inspired mind and pen? There are seven "mysteries" declared in the epistles only, and one of these seven is in Hebrews and in no other,—the mystery of the God-Man. Here is one remarkable numerical side-light.

In the 8th of Romans, in that grand "peroration," where Paul reaches the climax of his argument, he gives successively 7 and then 10 particulars:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?—Seven.

For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come:

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,

## Spiritual Symmetry

shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—Ten.

Here the great numbers of completeness 7 and 10, one following the other in immediate succession.

In that other “peroration”—the conclusion of that grand 12th chapter of Hebrews—we find again 7 and then 10 particulars:

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest.

And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words:—Seven.

But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.

To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.—Ten.

No two separate human writers, following the idiosyncrasies of their natural style, would be apt to use such exactly similar methods of summing up; but Paul, writing to the Romans of seven things and then of ten others in immediate succession, likewise in the Epistle to the Hebrews, when he reaches again another grand climax, exhibits the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

same peculiarity of style, accumulating items in the same masterly way—first seven things and then ten.

If we should search the Bible and compare scripture with scripture till we discovered this numerical system as pervading the Word of God, many of the blasphemous assaults of rationalistic criticism might be answered in our minds by the discovery of such mathematical plan pervading the whole scripture, and sometimes serving to accredit even those parts of it that are assailed.

Perhaps the greatest argument of all in its favour is that such study may show one harmonic purpose pervading this Divine Book from beginning to end,—a symmetrical plan. We all know enough about human compositions of music to know that there are four things upon which the identity of a musical composition depends,—key, time, rhythm of movement and musical theme. These are musical terms that everyone understands who has ever studied music, and one can often identify a passage in an oratorio because it corresponds to the general theme and plan of the composition as it was in the mind of the composer.

This precious Book is one grand oratorio. We listen and hear a song by Moses, who is chanting a solo about the wonders of creation. We continue

## Spiritual Symmetry

to listen, and hear successive strains that have to do with this great musical theme, various instruments and performers taking up their successive parts in the performance. Now it is David's Psalter; again it is Isaiah's golden lute; then Ezekiel's iron harp; then the quartette of the Evangelists; then the various strains of the epistles, some in the major and some in the minor key, but all variations on the one theme; till at last, in the Apocalypse, we hear all the hosts of heaven and earth combining in a grand final "Halleluiah Chorus,"—"Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." There is the same redemptive theme, the same beat of time, the same rhythmic movement, the same great plan and purpose of redemption and same controlling Leader, from first to last!

## CHAPTER IX

### SPIRITUAL TYPES

IN the Word of God there is much teaching of truth through the form of *types*.

A type is a general name for a forecast of truth or fact, by way of figure, using the word "figure" in its general sense. It may be a material object that is chosen, an event, a person, a rite or ceremony, or it may be a precept; but, if there be in any of these a meaning that is deeper than that which appears, or if some future development of truth or of fact is thereby foreshadowed, we call it a *type*.

One of the peculiar difficulties confronted in discussing types, is the popular prejudice against the entire study. It is supposed to lead one more or less into the realm of fanciful absurdities, which sometimes reach a climax in the ridiculous; and unhappily some who aspire to be expositors of Bible truth have too often "given occasion for the enemy to blaspheme" or deride.

For example, a clergyman was speaking on that passage in Mark (iv: 36-41) where, having narrated the remarkable miracle of Christ in stilling the sea,

## Spiritual Types

it is added that "there were also with Him other little ships." This "expositor" took occasion to remark, in his zeal for his own denomination, that the ship, in which Christ was, represented *his* church (the Anglican), and that Christ was in *the* church, and not in any other of the so-called "churches"; therefore the word that went forth, calming the sea, went forth from that particular ship, and not from the other little ships that were gathered around, which corresponded to the various other sects; Christ was not in any of them, and they really owed their safety to the fact that He was in the other ship,—a very illuminating exposition and application of scripture!!

Another interpreter of the word contends that the woman of Samaria was typical, that she represented the Samaritan people, and that the five husbands she had had represented the five religions which we are told in II Kings were brought by these immigrants from other countries; and that the religion that then prevailed in Samaria, which was a mixed adulterated form of Jehovah worship, was represented by him with whom she was then living, who was not her husband.

One feels tempted to compare all this kind of "exposition" with Mr. Taylor's parody on "Mother Goose's Melodies," in which he satirically argues

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

that the "Song of Sixpence," about the four-and-twenty blackbirds baked in the pie, is really a song about the sunrise, the crust of the pie is the firmament, and the blackbirds, twenty-four in number, of course are the 24 hours of the day; the breaking of the crust is the dawn, and the clothes hanging out on the line are the clouds; that the maid is retiring Night, the king is the sun, and the queen is the moon; and the particular blackbird that snipped off the maid's nose so tragically is the hour of sunrise!—such a travesty of typical teaching only makes ridiculous what ought to be laughed at.

It is not only into ridicule that such methods of interpretation bring the holy scriptures, but some such interpretations lead to heresy, as in the case of the famous "Sun-myth." It was suggested, not many years ago, that Christ was after all nothing but a new incarnation of the Sun-god that the twelve disciples were the twelve hours of the day; and that the reason why he was represented as being born about Christmas time was because the days are shortest at the Winter solstice and the year may be said to be reborn about that time—and actually this Sun theory won not a few disciples, even in Christian Britain.

How then shall we safely deal with types? and why should we deal with them at all?

## Spiritual Types

In the first place, typical teaching permeates the whole scripture, like a golden thread running through a string of pearls. And furthermore, we are distinctly taught to interpret certain things as types. But there are at least two safeguards which may and should be put about all typical teaching.

The first is that, in many cases, the Bible itself supplies the *key* to the interpretation of types, as, for instance, when we are told in I Cor. x: 4 that the "Rook" in the desert "was Christ"; and in Heb. x: 20, that the second veil, immediately before the Mercy Seat, that was rent asunder from top to bottom when Christ uttered His dying cry, was the "flesh" of Christ.

Wherever in scripture a key is hung by a lock, there need be no hesitation in putting the key into the lock, for we may be assured that it will open the door into some chamber of God's mystery.

There is still another case in which we are perfectly safe in typical teaching, viz.: Where the *doctrine* taught is derived from distinct and definite doctrinal statements of holy scripture, and the *type* is employed only as an *illustration* of doctrine, elsewhere taught. That is to say, if we do not primarily draw the doctrine from the type, unsustained by other passages of scripture,

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

but first draw the doctrine from definite doctrinal teaching, and then revert to the type as a confirmation of the doctrine, and a pictorial or figurative expression of it, we are within perfectly safe limits.

Within some such careful limitations as these we undertake to show somewhat of the value of typical teaching in holy scripture.

The materials, gathered together for this department of study, are much more than it is possible to use within moderate space, but a few examples may show how the study of this theme opens before us a territory worthy of exploration, and of most beneficial and instructive suggestion.

Out of this large body of types we select only such as *centre about salvation*,—and particularly about what may be called the *experimental history of the believer*, from the time when he first finds salvation, until salvation is consummated in Glory. And, in order to be as brief and as pertinent as possible, even in this line of truth we confine ourselves to a few prominent mountain peaks of Biblical teaching. We have selected, as most honouring to the Word of God, the following:

I. The Starting Point of Salvation. II. Its Basis. III. Its Consummate Privilege. IV. Its Historic Progress. V. Its Imminent Perils. VI.

## Spiritual Types

Its Important Duties. VII. Its Present Rest-Life in God. VIII. Its Final Consummation in Glory.

It is practicable only to touch lightly even upon these, but they all represent necessary steps in the demonstration of the fact that in holy scripture there had been taught typically as well as doctrinally *The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to the Next*, long before John Bunyan was lodged in Bedford Jail. Moses himself outlined, under the guidance of the Spirit, this original "Pilgrim's Progress."

I. The Starting Point of Salvation. Let us recur once more to that remarkable type in the Twelfth of Exodus—the sprinkling of the blood on the right and left hand door posts and on the upper door posts of the Hebrew houses. It is hard to see how to avoid the conclusion that God meant here to emphasise the *Starting Point of Salvation*, which is,—what? Deliverance from Judgment. That is the first thing a sinner needs. Judgment impends over him. God distinctly says in the chapter referred to that the blood shall be sprinkled on the side and upper door posts. "For," He says, "I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and, when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy

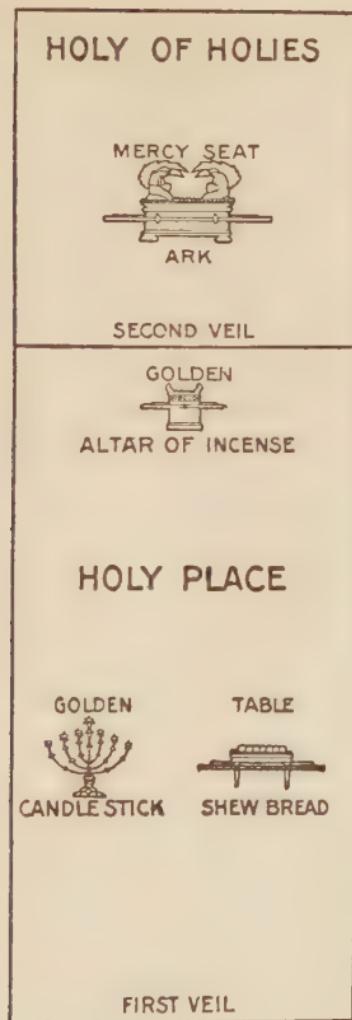
## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

you." There is thus deliverance from Judgment by the sprinkled blood. Thus early does God in types thunder out this great truth, which He bids us proclaim to the world, that the refuge of any sinner, however vile, is under the Blood, and that, when the Blood is between him and the just anger of God, the Destroying wrath of God cannot touch him. The blood is the life, and the sprinkled blood means that the penalty has been paid for sin, so that, when the sinner comes under the shelter of that blood, and puts it above him, upon the right hand and upon the left hand, so that he is surrounded by it, God *cannot pass over the blood to judgment*, for that would be exacting a penalty a second time. O for a voice loud enough and piercing enough to reach every human soul on earth, and assure a sinner that whatever his sin is, however long he has sinned, and however terribly he has sinned, and even though he thinks he has passed the limits of forgiveness,—if he will take his shelter under the blood, all that there is in the God-head is pledged that no judgment shall touch him! He is perfectly safe.

That typical truth could not be taught more impressively and conclusively by any type than it was taught by the Passover.

II. If we pass on to ask as to the *Basis of this*

# DIAGRAM of the TABERNACLE AND ITS FURNITURE



## Spiritual Types

*great salvation*, we find a system of sacrifices, separated into two classes. In the first seven chapters of Leviticus are presented the five great sacrificial offerings, two of them of “ill-savour,” three of them of “sweet savour.”

In the former is expressed typically the idea that the *life of an innocent victim is sacrificed for the guilty*; and in the second group of these sacrifices is the complementary truth that *the life of the ransomed is given back in service to the Ransomer*. When these two great aspects of sacrifice are appreciated, we have two mutually complementary truths set before us. First, the sinner comes to Jesus Christ to avail himself of His atoning Blood, so that though guilty and condemned he may, through that vicarious offering of an innocent life, secure his own salvation. Then, having been thus saved by His blood, he presents himself as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is his reasonable service, and offers himself to God in grateful obedience and service, not in recompense, but in recognition of this infinite love.

III. The supreme *privilege of this new and holy life* is expressed by two things, the *Tabernacle* and the *Priesthood*.

In the simple diagram which is presented oppo-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

site, pains are taken, as far as may be, to give the proportions of the parts of the Tabernacle, and the prominent vessels and furniture of the Tabernacle, so that the reader may get some conception of it, and keep it before his eyes as an object lesson.

There was in the Tabernacle an outer court, and, in that outer court, in front of the first veil, there stood two articles of furniture, the *brazen altar* of sacrifice and the *laver*. Then the first veil, and within that three other articles of furniture,—the *table of shewbread*, or the bread of Divine presence, the *golden candlestick*, and beyond them and nearer to the second veil, the *golden altar of incense*. Within the second veil rested the *Ark*, having for its cover the *Mercy Seat* with the two cherubim facing each other and bowing over the ark.

Every believer should have that picture engraved on the tablet of his mind. More room is taken up in the Bible in the description of the Tabernacle and its belongings than with any other one subject treated in its pages, and every detail of the Tabernacle, to the smallest minutiae, is described with amazing particularity. Seven times in the Bible do we read these words addressed to Moses or to David: "That it shall be made after the pattern showed in the Mount," or given "in writing."

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

There is a meaning in all this, for there must be some reason for this pattern being placed before us with such conspicuousness and in such detail.

We venture to give a tentative interpretation of these features of the Tabernacle; it may not concur with the views of every reader, but it is the fruit of many years of Biblical study, and is suggested for consideration.

Let the three Courts together represent *the way of approach to Jehovah*.

The Outer Court may then represent the *terms of communion with Him*.

The Inner Court, the Holy Place, may represent *the Forms of Communion*.

The Holiest of All may represent *the Ideal of such Communion*.

In the three together are represented a *graded sanctity*, and the *successive stages* of acceptable drawing near into the Divine Presence. There is only *one way* of approach. It was possible to enter the holy place only by way of the brazen altar and laver and through the first veil, and to enter into the inmost court, and Holiest of All, only through the second veil; for there was neither door, nor window, nor skylight; nor method of entrance save by this one way. Even the High Priest, in

## Spiritual Types

approaching the Shechinah must go step by step along this one definite path.

In the Outer Court, first of all, the worshipper met the Brazen Altar, which was inseparable from the idea of *expiation by blood*. That is therefore the first of the *terms of approach* to God. The sinner comes by way of the Cross; by way of atoning Blood, just as we have seen in Exodus.

Back of the Brazen Altar was the Brazen *Laver*, with water in it, and so far as we can interpret it from the keys given us in scripture, this seems to stand for the joint work of the *Word of God* and the *Spirit of God*, in *imparting the divine nature* to the sinner *in regeneration*. After he has availed himself of expiation by blood, he must also avail himself of this Regeneration by the Word and Spirit. He thus becomes a new creation, "old things are passed away, and all things are become new." These are the *two terms of approach*, and there are no others given in the Word of God—the Atoning Blood, the Renewing Spirit.

When one has availed himself of expiatory blood and regenerating power, he has become a *disciple*, and now he is prepared and permitted to enter within the *first veil*. Let us stop to observe this; that the Holy Place stands for the *forms of service*, and God *never expects or accepts any service except*

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

from a blood-washed and regenerate disciple. The *Church may*, but *He does not*. It is only when one is saved by the blood and renewed by the Spirit that he is entitled or capacitated to enter into this department of service, as it is called in Hebrews IX, 6: "Accomplishing the *service of God*," referring to the duties of priests in the Holy Place.

In the Holy Place were three articles of furniture:

The Table of Shewbread, or Bread of the Divine Presence, renewed weekly, expressing consecrated substance.

The Golden Candlestick, standing for the Light of Testimony.

And further on, the Altar of Incense, which undoubtedly suggests supplication and intercession.

What lessons on service are here taught! The three forms of service are giving, living and praying. Giving of our substance, and, better still, self-giving with whatever has been committed to us as stewards; Witnessing to God by our lips, and, more important still, by our lives,—"Ye are the light of the world." And, still further on, Prayer and supplication and intercession for all men, and especially for the household of saints.

As is no doubt true, all these have *primary* reference to the person and work of the Lord

## Spiritual Types

Jesus, yet this does not exclude, but rather includes, a secondary for subordinate reference to all who are in Christ Jesus; for in the New Testament what is affirmed of Him in the major sense is commonly affirmed of those who are by faith members of His mystical Body.\*

These are the forms of service, and there are no others. When a child of God gives as he ought, lives as he ought, and prays as he ought, what else could he do? And the fact that the Golden Altar of Incense stands *nearest* the second veil and the Holies of All, is a possible hint to us that even grander than giving and witnessing is a life of perpetual prayer; it implies that the true suppliant is nearer to heaven, and nearer to God; it represents the sublimest form of service.

Entering within the second veil, we find the Ark and the Mercy Seat. What did the Ark contain? First of all, and significantly, the two tables of stone; upon the Ark the Mercy Seat, with the cherubim meeting over it, and the Shechinah fire burning between them. We need not look very far in the New Testament to find what all this means. The believer sees in this Holiest Place of All the symbols of the obedience of Christ, and the intercession of Christ, in whom the Ideal of communion

\*Comp. John VIII: 12; Matt. v: 14; John XVIII: 37; xv: 27; Ephes. ii: 20-22; 1 Pet. ii: 4, 5.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

and union with God is reached,—the believer there learning that he is by grace so absolutely identified with Christ's obedience, that he may approach directly to God through Christ's mediation and intercession. There seems nothing fanciful about such an understanding of the types; such is their most natural interpretation, and abundantly verified by passages of scripture which might be given by the score.

In addition to this outline of the structure and furniture of the Tabernacle, the main facts about the priests' garments demand also a cursory glance. The washing and anointing of the priests, the touching of the ear, and of the thumb, and also of the great toe of the right foot, and all like things undoubtedly have a typical significance. But Exodus xxviii suggests some of the highest typical lessons. This chapter contains an elaborate description of three things that pertain to the High Priest's attire:

First, the onyx stones on the shoulder pieces of the Ephod.

Second, the Breastplate, that was suspended from these onyx stones or shoulder pieces by golden chains attached to the rings of the breast-plate.

Third, the Golden Crown that was put on the

## Spiritual Types

forefront of the Mitre, and which bore the inscription "Holiness to the Lord." (See verse 36.) No one chapter in the Old Testament is more abundant in great types of the Lord Jesus Christ than this 28th chapter of Exodus, and many have found unspeakable joy in reading that chapter and seeing reflected in it His offices in our behalf.

Why is all this detailed description given of such minute matters as the two onyx stones, the twelve stones in the Breastplate, and the golden forefront of the Mitre with the sentence engraved upon it "Holiness to the Lord?" That it may appear that there is a heavenly meaning in it, the Holy Spirit caused to be written and recorded in the 38th verse of this chapter:

And the holy crown "shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts, and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted by the Lord."

Observe the change of pronoun, "And it shall be always upon HIS forehead, that THEY may be accepted before the Lord."

When the High Priest was fully attired, these objects, described in this chapter, confronted the gaze of the observer:

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

First, there were these *onyx stones*, each of them containing *six* names of the tribes of Israel.

Then, closely connected with these, and in fact supported by them, was the *breastplate*, each of whose twelve stones contained the name of *one* of the tribes of Israel.

Then, on the forefront of the Mitre, most conspicuous,—on the *brow*, which is the distinguishing feature of man, and therefore represents the noblest of all his physical features—was “*Holiness to the Lord.*” The Mitre could scarcely be seen for the forefront that was upon it.

The shoulder is the place of strength, and suggests *upholding power*. It is used throughout the Bible for the bearing of burdens of responsibility and government. (*Isaiah ix: 6.*)

What does the Breastplate stand for? The breast is the place of the heart and suggests *love*. It is where the heart beats, where the emotions were supposed to reside—near the solar plexus—and it is inseparable from the thought of the affections.

Thus in the attire of the High Priest is conveyed the suggestion that the Lord Jesus Christ on His shoulders bears up the burdens of His believing disciples; that on His breast of love he bears them individually, in a sympathetic union with Himself;

## Spiritual Types

and that, because of the "Holiness unto the Lord" which *He* represents in His whole being, *we* are accepted before the Lord. In other words, in the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ we have the assurance of our acceptance; in His might and power we find our support and strength; in His love we find our solace and our sympathy.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, is not all this taught us *doctrinally*? We read in the first chapter: "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Then, in the latter part of the chapter, Paul prays, as is recorded, that they might know "the exceeding greatness of His *power* to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power." Again, in the third chapter, in the other prayer for the Ephesians: "That they might know the *love*," as in the first chapter that they might know the "*power*." Here, as it seems, the interpretation is to be found of the three types already referred to, in the garments and adornments of the High Priest: The holiness of Christ, that we may be accepted; the power of Christ, that we may be sustained in duty and supported in temptation; the love of Christ, that we may be confident of sympathy, that we may be

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

solaced in sorrow, and that we may be emboldened in prayer. The names of all the saints are engraved on His heart, as though every beat of that heart and every upheaval of that bosom speaks of His love for us.

So looking at the Tabernacle we get suggestions as to the *terms* and *forms* and *ideal* of communion; and looking at the High Priest's attire, we get suggestions as to the grounds of acceptance before the Lord, and strength and solace and sympathy in all burdens of duty and conflicts with temptation and trial.

IV. Have we no typical hints of the advance of the believer in that "Pilgrim's Progress," first written at the dictation of the Spirit, by Moses? A remarkable "Pilgrim's Progress" it is. The stations in the journey from Egypt to Canaan represent, every one of them, stages of growth or declension in spiritual life, and this may be plainly seen if the progress of events is carefully observed in the narrative.

The Exodus: Egypt is treated in the Bible as the type of the land of sin, and of the world, out of which the disciple is called to be a child of God and follower of Christ.

Then at the Red Sea, they were "baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." We are not

## Spiritual Types

at risk of running into fanciful interpretation, for we derive our key from I Cor. x:2. The Red Sea stood for the baptism of water and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Then Israel comes to Sinai; that is the place of holy law.

From Sinai to *Kadesh* on the Borders of the Land of Canaan; that place is the type of the foretaste of the Divine rest-life, reserved for the trustful and obedient believer in this world.

So one by one we trace the stages of progress in the desert, until the Israelites come to the Jordan, which they cross—type of self-surrender—and to Jericho, where the first great representative conquest takes place in the land of Canaan. God says: “I brought you out, that I might bring you in.” And again, to show that the whole pilgrimage from Egypt to Canaan, the period of the Exodus and the Wanderings in the Desert, have a typical teaching, in the Epistle to the Hebrews from III:7 to IV:11, God gives us His own interpretation of what was meant that we should learn by that journey from Egypt to Canaan. It is all treated there as a type of the disciple’s advance from the first knowledge of Christ, in Deliverance from Judgment, till he enters by faith into the present rest that remains for the children of God—notice, a

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

present rest, for Canaan is never treated in the Bible as a type of *heaven*,—it stands always for a *present* rest to be realised in *this* life, to be enjoyed by the appropriation of Divine promise, and by passing over the Jordan of self-dedication, as already the believer is supposed to have passed over the Red Sea of baptism.

As to all minute details, every reader will interpret for himself; all we seek to do is to lead out the mind of the intelligent student of the scripture into the examination of the subject, that he may form his own conclusions under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

V. As the Bible gives a hint of the *progress* of the child of God, it gives us also a hint of his *perils* and *dangers*, which are set forth typically and very vividly in the Old Testament

Thus, *Backsliding*, as in the proposition to return to Egypt.

*Idolatry*, as exemplified under the very brow of Sinai.

*Rebellion*, as manifested in the disgraceful murmurs against God, and unwillingness to submit to His leadership.

*Unbelief*, as shown at Kadesh Barnea, where they stood within an appreciable reach of the holy land, and could have passed over into it within a

## Spiritual Types

few hours; but they feared and refused to go up, and were about to stone Caleb and Joshua because they encouraged them to do so, depending upon God.

*Profanation*, as exhibited in Korah and his company, Dathan and Abiram.

*Sensuality*, the great peril that entangled them in Moab. And finally

*Compromise*, the great temptation that they met and yielded to in Canaan.

Backsliding, Idolatry, Rebellion, Unbelief, Profanation, Sensuality, Compromise with the world, these are all there, and they are presented consecutively in the history of the Children of Israel from the time they left Egypt till the time they settled in Canaan.

Notice further, how their compromise with the Canaanitish idolaters ultimately drove them into *captivity*, and the interpretation of that part of this history is clearly given in the 36th chapter of Ezekiel. In this unique and marvellous chapter (verses 16–38), God solemnly arraigns His people. He tells them that, while they were in the land of promise, they brought into that land the corruption of the idolatrous nations about them; and that therefore, as they craved the idolatries of these heathen nations and imported them in their own

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

land, He, in turn, exiled them from their own land into these very heathen countries, that they might have enough of their coveted idolatries. That is exactly what God always does with His Church. When the Church compromises with the world, He gives His people over into captivity to the world, that in such captivity they may get enough of the idols they have sought.

VI. The duties of the holy life are also forecast in the recorded history of Israel; and those duties are typically included and foreshadowed in the construction and encompassing of the Tabernacle, and then in the encompassing marches around Jericho in the land of Canaan; the construction of the Sanctuary, that God might dwell among them; the encompassing of the Tabernacle by their own camps, that they might keep close to God and to one another. For if disciples keep near to God, they must get and keep near to each other; and therefore, the best way to cultivate good fellowship with fellow disciples is to cultivate close fellowship with the Lord Himself.

As to the way in which they took Jericho, who can read that story without seeing that it was somehow an indication of the way in which God's warfare must be carried on? Read II Cor. x: 3-6, those remarkable words which no doubt refer to the taking of that first stronghold.

## Spiritual Types

For though we walk after the flesh, we do not war after the flesh;

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;)

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

If the story of Jericho be carefully read, there is found in it an amazing suggestiveness. First, in the appearance of the invisible Leader, who called himself the "Captain of the Lord's Host," and from whom Joshua took the details of directions as to every step taken afterwards in the siege and capture of the city. Then notice the march round Jericho. The armed men and priests going before; the Ark in the midst; the blowing of the ram's horns; the waiting for the Divine signal; the shout of victory; then, without striking a blow with a carnal weapon, the fall of the walls. If this is not an exhibition, typically, of the way in which God's work of missions is to be carried on, there is at least a remarkable analogy—the encompassing of the world field with its strongholds of error, under the invisible Leader, and exactly

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

according to His directions; the carrying of the Ark of God in the midst—jealousy for the truth and worship and service of God; the proclamation of the Gospel, typified in the blowing of the ram's horns; doing “everything with prayer,” typified in the waiting upon God for His signal; the abandonment of all carnal weapons for spiritual, and the anticipative shout of triumph. If the Church had done all her work in that way, no one can tell what her conquests might have been at this hour.

The 21st and 22nd chapters of Revelation are amongst the most important writings that the Holy Spirit has ever submitted to the reading and study of man. They are all highly symbolical and typical. What do they mean?

Here is a City of God, and it is at the same time a city of man. No reader thinks for a moment that it is literally described here in the dimensions of equal length and breadth and height; in the gates, each of one massive pearl; in the gold of the streets and gems of the walls; in the fact that there is no temple, and so on. This is a figurative description, meant to convey spiritual conceptions.

Four things about it impress us as far as *God* is concerned:

1. God *built* it. It was not built from earth

## Spiritual Types

towards heaven, but let down from heaven to earth.

2. God *dwells* in it. It is His habitation.
3. The *Glory* of God *lightens* it.
4. The *Throne* of God is in it.

Thus, it is built by God. His Glory lightens it. He Himself dwells in it. And His will is absolutely done in it by every inhabitant.

It is also the City of *Man*.

1. It is curiously described as though it were built *of men*. It is a community. It is a City, and a city is built of citizens, not of brick and mortar and stones and timbers, and hence we read of the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb as being on those precious stones.

What kind of *building material* is found there? In its cubic symmetry is suggested the perfection of development and form; in its glory is hinted the *virtue*, that is radiant with a light within, not like a painted outside that conceals rottenness. The gold of the New Jerusalem is not opaque gold that hides God; God can be seen through it, and is glorified in it. Even the gems burn with an imprisoned flame. It is built of holy and redeemed saints, radiant with God's beauty and glory.

Again, it is *open to all*. It has three gates on each side, and, as there is "no night there," and

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

they are never "shut by day," they must be always open. From whatever quarter any pilgrims come, if only their face is set in the *right direction*, they will all get there alike. No man can say you cannot come from the east or west, north or south; it matters not from what point of the compass, if you only move steadily Godward.

Again, there is nothing to prevent going out if you are in and there is nothing to prevent your coming in, if you are out, except the fact that you do not desire to: The essential bond is *affinity*.

"Fire ascending seeks the sun,  
Rivers to the ocean run,  
So a soul that's born of God  
Pants to view His glorious face,  
*Upward tends to His abode*  
To rest in His embrace."

There would be nothing to prevent your leaving that city if you did not feel at home, and what is there to prevent your entering if you are at home nowhere else but in the presence of God? Notwithstanding that men fight against the Bible doctrine of the eternal state, are not the foundations of this teaching laid in every man's conscious inner life? The simple fact is that the holy citizens of heaven are held together, not by external restraints, but by spiritual affinity. And

## Spiritual Types

fallen souls, if they were invited to enter, not one of them would accept the invitation. They could not bear the light and glory of heaven, any more than a diseased and inflamed eye can confront without agony the blazing sun of the mid-day, or even the fainter lustre of diffused light. This city, built of redeemed men, is open to all men, but only such as have an affinity for God will go in.

It is also a *Bridal City*. The New Jerusalem is the Bride of the Lamb, and those who do not belong to the Lamb as a wife belongs to her husband, by the sacred espousal of faith and love, will never have, nor desire to have, a part in this City of God!

## CHAPTER X

### SPIRITUAL WISDOM

“THE Wisdom that is from above.” This expression, taken from James III: 17, is a noteworthy phrase. In Proverbs [II, III, IV, VIII and IX] Wisdom is personified; and by a sort of sublime allegory referred to as a Royal Personage building a palace, and setting forth a banquet, to which she invites all the sons of men, that she may draw them from the ensnaring Feast of Folly.

Wisdom, as used in the Word of God, includes two things: *Concepts* and *Precepts*. Concepts, or ideas of truth; Precepts, or rules of conduct. In both of these respects the Bible stands preeminent, and beyond all comparison. It contains the sublimest conceptions of truth, and it supplies the most complete and comprehensive rules for the conduct of life.

Another thing that is very peculiar to the Bible is that all these Concepts, or ideas of truth, and Precepts, or rules of duty, are so inseparably bound together, like the members of one organic body, that each implies and necessitates the other; so that to understand God’s ideas of truth is to

## Spiritual Wisdom

understand His rules of conduct; and inversely not one of either could be severed from this body of Truth without maiming the whole body, without losing something that could not be dispensed with.

Moreover, it follows that if we truly get hold of any great central idea presented in the Bible, and follow it as a clue, it will interpret all the rest. To trace out one great doctrine or precept in all its various branches will reveal all the rest of truth and duty, as a complete system, arranged round a grand centre.

The subject is too great to treat properly in a brief compass,—the wisdom that is in the Word, in the way of Concepts and Precepts,—and so, following the plan already indicated, we may take a central conception, and then see what is involved in it; and, having outlined the *truth* as the Bible presents it, see what *duties* inevitably follow.

We select first the conception of THE UNIVERSE, and observe what grows out of it, and what duties come from the truth that is presented in that great theme.

What is meant by the Universe? We now use the word as the most comprehensive word that we know of to embrace the *total sphere of truth*.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

There is a Universe of *Being*, embracing God and all other beings. There is a Universe of *Space*, embracing the planets and the stars. There is a Universe of *Duration*, which embraces time and eternity.

The doctrine which the Bible presents of the Universe is one of the most unique of all its unfoldings of truth. It will richly repay us to spend a life in studying what the Bible has to say about this threefold Universe of Being, of Space, of Duration.

In the first place, Head over all else, is *God* Himself, in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; yet not three Gods, but one God.

Then God is represented as having what we call *natural* perfections: such as Power, Wisdom, Knowledge, Infinity, Eternity, Immutability, Omnipresence; and Moral attributes, such as Righteousness, Truth, Justice, Holiness, Benevolence. Can any other conception of God be found anywhere else that at all compares with that? Is anything left out that should be put in? or anything put in that ought to be left out? Here is presented a Supreme Being, with Absolute Perfection.

Then, in connection with this Universe, there is a *material* and an *immaterial* department; there is that which is temporal and that which is eternal;

## Spiritual Wisdom

that which is changeable and that which is unchangeable; that which is living and that which is dead; that which is present and that which is future. Thus it begins to be apparent what a sublimely wonderful subject we have to contemplate.

In this Universe there is a department of *Being*, about which it especially becomes us to inform ourselves.

The Bible represents God, of course, as the Head of all Being, but, underneath Him, a vast *Hierarchy of Angels*. These Angelic intelligences appear to exist in *seven ranks or orders*: Archangels, of which there seem to have originally been three—Gabriel, who has the special charge of the message of salvation, and Michael, who has specially to do with the *Jews* (Dan. xii) and the *bodies* of God's saints, and Satan, the fallen archangel, head of the revolted angels.

Underneath the Archangels, apparently, are principalities, powers, authorities, thrones, dominions, and among the fallen angels also world rulers of this darkness, and wicked spirits or demons, as they are called in Ephesians vi. The general word “spirits” doubtless represents the lowest of the orders, both of angels that are obedient to God, and that are subject to Satan—underneath the rest in rank.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Into this Universe of Being, which God, when He made it, pronounced good, and which was perfect for its purposes, sin entered. How it entered we know not, but it did, and caused a revolt, first among the angels of God, so that they became divided into two classes, the unfallen angels, and the fallen angels, and the latter appear to have carried over into their revolt the same ranks and orders which existed among them in their condition of innocence; for we read of fallen principalities and powers and thrones and dominions, just as of the unfallen. At the head of these fallen angels is Satan. As already intimated, Satan was probably one of the original three Archangels like Gabriel and Michael; but whoever thinks of Satan as an inferior being, belonging to a low class of intelligence, has not properly read his Bible. All those current representations of the Devil as a repulsive being, a monster, half animal, half human, with horns and hoofs, and such like, are most misleading and false. Satan is probably incomparably the *greatest* created Being that God has ever made, and next to the Lord Jesus Christ in majesty and dignity, intelligence and power.

We certainly ought to understand the character of Satan. We call especial attention to that passage in Ezekiel that most commentators be-

## Spiritual Wisdom

lieve to be a description, not of any human "Prince of Tyrus," but of Satan as the *tutelary deity of Tyrus*, Ezek. xxviii: 12-19:

Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald and the carbuncle, and gold; the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

Thou are the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness, etc.

If that is not a description of Satan, we know not what it can be; and if it be a description of Satan, let us observe that the language here used about him could be used of no created being beside him that we have any knowledge of, and approximates very closely to the language elsewhere used of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Let us understand then that there is a great Hierarchy of unfallen Angels, countless in number (Revelation v: 2), and another Hierarchy of fallen Angels led on by Satan, who is a fallen Archangel; and that this Arch Rebel has introduced eternal enmity into the Universe of Being between God and obedient creatures on the one hand, and himself and disobedient creatures on the other; but God will show Himself triumphant at the last; when Satan with His fallen angels, and all that obey and serve him, will be turned into Hell. (Rev. xx.)

The next great factor in this truth about the Universe, is MAN. Man was created in innocence, body, soul, spirit. His body allied him with the earth; his soul allied him with all living creatures that God had made; and his spirit allied him with God himself, and constituted, doubtless, the majesty of his likeness to God.

Satan tempted man successfully, and he fell, and all man's powers and purposes and being were diverted and perverted from their original ends, just as in the case of Satan and the fallen angels.

His body became his snare, because it was the home of the flesh with its lusts; his soul became his snare, because it was allured by the charms of the world; his spirit became his snare, because it was in practical alliance with the Devil.

## Spiritual Wisdom

The Bible teaches us that God had planned a Redemption that was adequate in every respect to the fall of man, and this Redemption included mainly two great factors, the God-Man and the Holy Spirit. Thus there were two Persons of the Trinity that gave themselves up to the application of the Redemption that God the Father had planned. Jesus Christ, uniting in Himself perfect Divinity and perfect humanity, descended to the earth. He took upon Himself not simply the body of man, but united with His Divine nature the *nature* of man. He did this because there was not a being in the Universe that could cope with Satan but the Son of God Himself. He became Man, that He might be a representative Man before God, that He might take man's place, that He might bear man's sin, that He might unite man with Himself; and, as in coming down to the earth in His Incarnation He brought God down to man, in His resurrection and ascension He bore man up to God.

As to the work of the Holy Spirit, after Christ has borne the sins of men in His own body on the tree, the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to man; He testifies to, magnifies, glorifies Christ; He makes Him attractive; and He imparts to believers the very faculties whereby

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

they apprehend, and receive, and enjoy Christ. Then the Holy Spirit becomes within them the indwelling power for regeneration and sanctification and equipment for service.

There is a very unique form in which the truth about the Holy Spirit is presented that is specially worthy of consideration, and if it seems at first a difficult subject to grapple with, it is a grand truth to apprehend.

The Holy Spirit is represented as the Christian's *element*. What do we mean by an element? It is that in which we live, and move, and have our being. It is the only thing of which it can be said we are *in it* while at the same time it is *in us*. The fish is in the water, and the water in the fish, the bird is in the air and the air in the bird; the iron in the fire and the fire in the iron. "Ye are *in the Spirit*, if so be that the Spirit is *in you*." "Abide in Me, and I in you." Here is language appropriate only to an element. The Holy Spirit is the personal element in which the believer as such is to live and move and have his being.

There are certain peculiarites about an element. For instance, it is *infinite*. It is boundless, like the atmosphere. It is *indispensable* to that which lives in it, yet it is *independent* of that which it

## Spiritual Wisdom

sustains. It is *inexhaustible*. It is *vital*. And it has this remarkable peculiarity, that it imparts to that which lives in it all that there is in itself, and yet retains all that there is in itself for every other being that lives in it. When we inhale the atmosphere, we inhale everything that the atmosphere has for the support of life, and yet all this sustaining power is equally at the disposal of all others who breathe it, and all get the same benefit.

And so the Holy Spirit is infinite. He is inexhaustible. He is independent of us, yet He is indispensable to us. He imparts His whole Self to every believer, yet He has His whole Self left for every other believer. We abide in Him, yet at the same time He abides in us. And just as the iron is put in the fire, in order that the fire may be in the iron, we are to abide in the Lord Jesus Christ in order that He may abide in us; and abide in the Holy Spirit, that He may abide in us, just as we abide in the atmosphere, in order that the atmosphere may abide in us.

These are not human ideas,—very far from it; these are the thoughts of God, found in holy scripture, and illustrate the fact that the wisdom of the Divine conceptions has never been paralleled by any human mind. We find these things no-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

where else but in the holy scripture. (Isaiah lv. 8).

Thus far we have looked at the Universe. We have seen God at the head of it. We have seen a great company of angels in distinct orders. We have seen sin entering into the universe, and making a revolt in this vast angelic company; and we have seen these armies of fallen and un-fallen angels arrayed against each other. We have seen Man created, body, soul and spirit, and falling into sin under the seductive power of Satan. And then we have seen God the Father planning Redemption; God the Son becoming God-Man to execute the Redemption; and we have seen God, the Holy Spirit, applying the blood, and the truth, and conferring the new nature, and becoming the element in which the new-born soul lives and moves and has his being. We have seen the secret, therefore, of the penalty of sin being paid in the blood of Christ; and the power of sin being broken by the indwelling efficiency and energy of the Holy Ghost. We have seen that God has made a divine preparation for the new life to be daily nourished and cherished and strengthened and renewed. And so by and bye, Sin, whose *penalty* has been paid, and whose *power* has been broken, shall be banished even as to its *presence*, for in that future home of which we read "nothing

## Spiritual Wisdom

entereth that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie."

And so there is one more truth about this great Universe of Truth that must be added to the rest, and that is the doctrine of the *Here and the Hereafter*.

We need to tarry a little at this stage of our thought; for this is one of the most solemn of all the truths of holy scripture. Here, probation beyond, destiny. Here, the opportunity; there, the judgment. Here, the offer of salvation; there, the condemnation or eternal salvation. Here, a mixed society, the good and the bad together, that the bad may discipline the good, and the good may restrain the bad; there, an unmixed society,—every man goes "to his own place," and "to his own company"; and the companionship and association and aggregation of the bad makes Hell, and the congregation and association and companionship of the good makes heaven; and no power can banish Hell, any more than it can banish Heaven, until it can banish sin.

When we come to consider these truths, we see that all these *concepts* or ideas of truth *imply precepts*. If God had not given us a single precept, but we could gather together and comprehend these great conceptions for ourselves, we could

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

make our own rules for holy living, for they would inevitably follow.

For instance, if all this is true, if man is a sinner, and has fallen under the power of Satan, and God has provided a redemption, it is perfectly obvious that the very first thing a man has to do is to "repent and believe the gospel." That is Christ's own message, as given in Mark 1: 15. But repentance is the negative side, and believing is the positive side of one great act of choice. Repentance is not simply a *feeling*, even as faith is not a feeling. Repentance is a change of mind or will towards sin and towards God, and faith is a change of attitude of heart towards sin and towards God. Repentance is like coming out of the room one has been in and shutting the door behind him, while faith is like entering into a new room. One is an abandonment, and the other is an acceptance. One is a renunciation, and the other is an appropriation. In one case we break the bond that has bound us to sin; in the other we accept a new and vital bond that re-unites God in Jesus Christ.

The next step naturally is, "Submit yourselves therefore unto God," another Biblical rule (James iv: 7). That is to say, as sin is a revolt against His authority, obedience is a surrender

## Spiritual Wisdom

to His authority. Give God His right, that is, give Him the Kingship voluntarily over the whole being. That is holy obedience. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," that is, put first things first. That is all. It is giving the first place in thought, in affection, in choice, to that which, in the nature of the case, ought to have the first place, which is the Kingdom of God—the righteousness of God. This is allying oneself with God, from Whom we have revolted. It is accepting His authority, which we have despised. It is seeking the interests of His kingdom. Faith so allies you with Him, that His kingdom becomes your kingdom, His victory your victory, His destiny is your destiny, as a believer.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

Napoleon took the idea of the military square in warfare from the Macedonian Phalanx, and it was not until other generals discovered his device and applied it themselves to warfare that Napoleon was successfully defeated. What is the military square? It is a four-sided array of soldiers, so that from whatever point you approach you find them facing you. You cannot come up from

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

behind, for there is no rear. There can be no flank movement, for they confront you as you advance from the right or the left. Thus they face toward the front or rear, and toward the right and left, alike.

That is somewhat the way God wants men to serve Him. He wants each follower to present the square,—intellect, affections, conscience, will so that, from whatever side evil approaches, it shall find a solid resistance, and it can never come up, as it were, from behind or the side and take by surprise. So, whichever way Duty approaches, it will find the disciple meeting it face to face,—the intellect with its convictions, the heart with its affections, the conscience with its moral decisions, the will with its controlling choice. That is the only way to live, and God wants the whole of every man for Himself, He will have no half and half surrender. Otherwise there is no obedience at all; no love at all. A divided heart is no heart, God-ward, at all.

We notice some strange precepts in the law of Moses, and often wondered why they were put before us in such detail. Look, for instance, at Lev. xi: 20:

All fowls that creep, going upon all four, shall be an abomination unto you.

## Spiritual Wisdom

And in order that we may understand that this is an important prohibition, in Deut. xiv: 19 we find it repeated in a different form:

And every creeping thing that flieth is unclean unto you.

It one case it is everything that creeps and also flies; in the other case it is everything that flies and also creeps. What does this mean? It is not needful to study anatomy or physiology much to understand that there is one kind of flesh of men, another of fishes, another of beasts, another of birds. Each created thing has its own organization form, fitness and purpose. The bird is made to fly in the air, and the reptile to creep on the earth. A reptile that simply creeps can do first-class creeping, and a bird that simply flies can do first-class flying; but the flying creature that creeps, and the creeping animal that flies, can neither do flying nor creeping of the best sort.

God wants everywhere first-class work. He wants the whole of us, and at our very best. He would not have us to be creeping along on the earth like a reptile, while we also try to fly like a bird. He would have us out and out, and know no *mixed* character; to be either saints or sinners. He says: "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Some so-called disciples are neither one thing or the other, neither bird nor reptile, but like a reptile that is trying to fly, or a bird that is trying to creep.

Here then is duty: Repent, believe the gospel. That sunders relations with sin, and establishes relation with Christ. Then submit yourselves unto God—that is a life of obedience. Then seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and put first things first. Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. That is the moral square, with the man showing himself directly face to face to God, from whatever direction God approaches him; and face to face with Temptation, from whatever quarter it assails him. That is whole-soul devotion, where he does not attempt to be two things at once,—to worship the Lord, and serve his own god.

Certain other commandments naturally follow: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Why? Because the snare of the world is found in this, that it hides by material things the immaterial, by the visible the invisible, by the temporal the eternal, by the things that are, the things that are hereafter. We have already seen that the believer is in alliance with

## Spiritual Wisdom

God, that he belongs to Jesus Christ, that he lives in the element of the Holy Spirit; and therefore God says: Love not the world, because if you do it will put between you and eternal things its temporal fascinations and hallucinations.

Boys often entrap and catch sparrows by a simple device. They roll up a piece of paper into the form of a funnel and stick it in the ground, putting seed at the bottom. The bird thrusts its head down into the funnel to get at the seed, and when it lifts its head the funnel sticks on, and it cannot see to direct its flight. The Devil is continually getting men ensnared in his funnels to get at his seed, and so he blinds them and they cannot fly. Of a great many worldly pleasures, the victims of Satan say to themselves, "I will pursue these pleasures of sin for a season, but I shall not care for them by and bye, and then I am going to abandon them." But they find themselves by and bye incapable of doing so. As Coleridge suggests, in building a stone arch, a wooden framework is used over which are set stones or bricks; and when the key-stone is set in, the wooden arch is knocked away, split up, and burned for fuel; but the stone or brick arch stands for centuries. Worldly pleasures are the wooden arches; we expect by and bye to discard

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

them as rubbish, but the arch of character and habit that has been built on htis temporary framework of worldly amusements and sinful pleasures has taken shape and will stand as long as God lives. "Love not the world." The world will hide eternal things from your view, and give false form to character.

We are to "mortify and crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts." Why? Because the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, the one to the other; so that, as a child of God, led by the Spirit, one may not do things that he inclines to do under the sway of the flesh. We are to "keep the body under, and bring it into subjection," and to "resist the Devil." Let us not forget the divine and correct order of things. "*Submit yourselves therefore unto God.*" *Resist the Devil.* To attempt to resist the Devil before submitting to God will bring failure every time; but he who first submits himself unto God has God on his side, and so it is *man plus God* meeting and resisting the Devil; and then Satan will surely be worsted. But to try to resist the Devil in one's own strength, without such alliance and affiance with God, brings only defeat to ourselves. Alliance with God is what strengthens us in our

## Spiritual Wisdom

defiance of the Devil; and he who is one with God may quietly, as with folded arms, look even the great adversary in the face, and say: "I fear thee not. My Lord Jesus Christ has met thee in the conflicts of temptation and has broken thy power." No man when in league with Jesus Christ needs to be afraid of the Devil, for he can do no harm to him who is in Christ.

We are not to forget that there is a Here and a Hereafter, and that we are called to *serve* now, and wait for our *reward*, then. The same great universal truth that demands that we repent, and believe, and submit to God; that we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; that we love Him with all the heart; that we love not the world, that we mortify the flesh, and resist the Devil, demands also that, even beyond salvation and sanctification, we aim at unselfish service.

Hence one other great precept: "Take up the cross and follow Me," says Jesus. What is the cross but another name for *Self-abnegation*?

"He that saveth his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for My sake and the gospels, the same shall save it."

This is a word, not to the unsaved, about salvation, but rather to the disciple about his reward. "Life," in the sense here used, is the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

sum of all present possibilities of serving God and blessing man. The grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die, otherwise it abides alone; but dying, brings forth much fruit. He who plans to save life, for purposes of self-indulgence, loses it for the higher purpose of serving man and glorifying God. He who voluntarily loses life, as far as self-advantage is concerned, saves life in service to God and blessing to men. If life be thus wasted in self-indulgence, then, even though the whole world were gained, life has been lost in God's eyes; and the time will come when, having to give up life, the world that has been purchased at such price must also be surrendered, and then "what shall it profit a man to have gained the whole world and lost his own life; or what shall he give in exchange for his life"—to buy back his lost opportunity? The opportunity has been lost for this world; it is also lost for the world to come! Even a believer may at the Last Day find that he has bartered for a mess of potage what even God Himself can never give him back; for even God cannot restore a lost hour, or bring back a forfeited opportunity, or make up for a waste of substance. Such things lie not within the range of power.

And so the final lesson of this great universal

## Spiritual Wisdom

truth is that the truly wise will live, first of all, for God, and, secondly, for humanity; and consider himself nothing but grain of God, like the Divine Son of Man, to fall into the ground and die—die to self-indulgence, and self-gratification, to self-honour and self-glory; that he may live for all that is great and glorious in the eternal purpose of the kingdom of God, and share with all other obedient beings eternal reward!

## CHAPTER XI

### SPIRITUAL VERDICTS

ONE of the most singular evidences of the Divine origin of the scriptures is found in the verdict which has been given concerning the Word of God, not only by its friends, but by its *foes*. Though we may not enter very largely into the compilation of this testimony, which pervades much of the literature of the eighteenth century, we may indicate how, in every department, this testimony has been given to the Word of God.

In the 12th Psalm, at the 6th verse, may be found our starting point:

The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

The Revised Version Reads:

.... as silver tried in a furnace on earth, purified seven times.

The idea seems to be that like thoroughly purified metal the Bible has been subjected to a *seven-fold test in human experience*, and that, in every case, it has come out of the trial magnificently triumphant, and has betrayed no alloy or dross. This then is the starting point.

## Spiritual Verdicts

This subject alone might command the entire space at our disposal. If we take up the Word of God, and look at its leading doctrinal teachings, and then seek for verification of them outside of that Word, we shall find it in every case; and it needs only a candid and impartial mind to see the evidence and admit its force. And where the Word of God is not received as such, there is frequently, if not always, not only an intellectual but *moral* obstacle in the way,—that is to say, some reason, in the heart, why the Holy Scriptures should not be received and welcomed as the rule of faith and conduct.

For instance, let us take a few leading teachings of the Word of God. Take the teaching about Creation, the centre of which is that creation is the work of a personal and infinite Creator. By a multitude of human devices men have sought to get rid of a personal Creator. Pantheism, and Materialism, and Deism, and many other “isms”—such as the doctrine of Chance, the doctrine of Evolution, and other like devices and inventions of men—take the place of the true doctrine of Deity, a personal Creator.

But certain absolutely indisputable facts argue in favor of a personal Creator. As we have seen, Design demands a Designer, and most particularly

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

where such design indicates and *forecasts* the future condition of growth, either in the vegetable or animal.

Note, as an example, that strange metamorphosis that takes place when the caterpillar passes through the chrysalis state. During a certain period or interval its condition is known as the cocoon. The caterpillar wraps itself round with a mysterious covering, and after some weeks, or possibly months, it emerges a butterfly or moth, materially different in the sphere of its being, and the materials on which it feeds, from its previous state. It began life as a crawling creature, feeding upon leaves; it ends life as a winged and soaring creature, living its short life on honey. Now here is an entirely different order of existence. The caterpillar could have had no knowledge of its future, for it has never been a winged creature, it has never lived in the air, and it has never fed on honey. And yet, if with a lance you cut down the sides of the cocoon, you will find in the chrysalis state the future organs of the butterfly, folded up like weapons within their sheath. Without a personal Creator, who can explain this forecast of the future in the caterpillar's structure? It is simply absurd to attempt to account for it in any other way; surely only a fool can say, even in his heart, "There is no God."

## Spiritual Verdicts

Take a second fact and illustration. Natural law demands an administrator, and most of all when there must be exceptions to natural law, to prevent its malignant and harmful working.

Here is a natural law that has but two or three exceptions that we know of, in the whole realm of the Universe. That law is that Heat expands, and Cold contracts. For instance, if water be subjected to the influence of cold, by removing the caloric element from it, it begins to contract, and steadily continues to contract, till just before it reaches the freezing point, when it mysteriously begins to *expand*. What is the effect? The ice is lighter than the water, and so floats instead of sinks. If the law were without exception, when the water formed into solid ice, the ice, being heavier than the water, would sink, and, during the long winter the streams would become a solid bed of ice, especially in cold climates, so that the warmest summer sun would only create a shallow body of water over an eternal bed of ice, and all vegetable and animal life in the streams would disappear, and the earth would become so far uninhabitable by man. How came it to be as it is? and who was it, that, when such exception to this uniform law became necessary for benevolent purposes, interposed to make an exception?

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

The Law itself certainly could not do it,—that is utterly impossible. A watch or clock, as long as it goes at all, will continue to move its hands round in a certain direction. By the law of the watch, that direction is never changed; but, if the owner finds his watch is running too fast, as an intelligent being, he pulls out the stem and reverses the hands. The watch itself could never have made that correction, or provided for that exception to its uniform law of motion; but there is a provision in the watch by which, when necessary, that uniform law can be suspended or reversed for the time, in order to serve the servicable purpose for which the watch is invented; and all this was provided for by the inventor. So He Who made the clockwork of the Universe provided for exceptions to its uniform working, when such exceptions were demanded in the interests of benevolence. This is an impregnable argument for a Divine Creator.

Again, life never comes except from life. One of the most pathetic of all experiments tried in modern times was that of Professor Huxley, when he put matter under a bell glass receiver, exhausted the air, and waited vainly for spontaneous life to develop! Though man can trace life from offspring to parent, he comes to a point where

## Spiritual Verdicts

there must have been a universal and infinite Parent, or there is no accounting for the beginning of life. Where did the first man come from, the first animal egg or germ, the first vegetable seed?

Then we have to find a beginning for *conscience*. Even were evolution an ascertained finality—even many evolutionists concede it is only a theory—there are certain gaps in the evolutionary theory that have never been bridged yet: such as the beginning of all things; the beginning of life; the beginning of consciousness; the beginning of conscience; all these are chasms in evolution that even philosophers do not know how to fill up, and which, as evolutionists confess, baffle them. But in the Bible, we find all this provided for in one eternal Source of all being—One from Whom all intelligence proceeds, all conscience proceeds, and all spiritual life proceeds. And there is no adequate hypothesis to meet these facts except the hypothesis that is given us in the Word of God.

Take the doctrine of Sin. The Bible doctrine of sin is substantially this, that it is not so much a matter of the conduct as it is of the character; that there is a depraved tendency in the human soul which develops and manifests itself in words and deeds, in thoughts and motives. How can anybody look at this world and not believe the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Bible doctrine of sin? Theodore Parker said that "sin is a *fall forward*," but it is a very disastrous fall, and one does not covet that kind of fall. What an absurdity! As though by sinning one gets on further than he would if he had not sinned.

Look at the facts in the history of the human race. Is there any room for question in any sane mind that there is in humanity a gravitation downward? Mark the solitary fact that it is always easy to do wrong, but it always requires effort to do right. That shows a native tendency to evil. If one wishes to be truthful, virtuous, upright, honest and brave, he has to summon all the powers of his manhood, and even then call on God to help him; but if he wants to lie and steal, and do acts of violence, he does not need any help, except the help that is in his own miserable self.

There is evidence in this world that sin is not only *innate*, but is *irrepressible*. All the forces that society has yet been able to wield have never coped with drunkenness, with lust, with crime, and with anarchy; and we seem, even in this boasted "twentieth century" of the Christian era, further if possible than ever from grappling successfully with these gigantic evils. It is because sin is in the world. It is because sin is in the human soul. It is because sin is innate and universal, irre-

## Spiritual Verdicts

pressible and invincible by any power but that of God.

Then again, notice the Bible doctrine of judgment, which is substantially this,—that, while, in this world, God forbears with men, allowing much that is evil to go unrecompensed, and much that is good to go unrewarded, the scales of His justice are seen to be absolutely balanced, when we get a glimpse of the Great White Throne, and the adjudications of the future state. Is not that a reasonable doctrine?

Moreover, have we not all a forecast in ourselves of future judgment? Man has majestic Assizes in his own soul. Memory summons and brings her witnesses from, as it were, the ends of the earth and the remotest time, and calls upon all our previous history to testify against us, and we cannot silence the witnesses. The more we try to silence memory, the more loud voiced she is. There is also in the soul a jury ready to hear the evidence, and bound to give judgment according to the evidence, and pronounce an impartial verdict of "guilty" or "not guilty." There is the judge sitting on the bench, and he cannot be bribed, and he cannot be blinded; and there is the sheriff—Remorse—ready, as with a whip of scorpions, to chastise and punish the soul that has

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

been arraigned before this inner bar of judgment. And if every man has the body of a court in his own conscience, why should he doubt that there is a "day in which God shall judge the secrets of men's hearts according to His Law and His Gospel"? Man has the reflection of the Great White Throne right here, in himself.

Then again, there is need of a future judgment, for, as is plain in human history, God does not deal equitably with men, this life only being the standard; the scales of justice do not hang evenly in *this* world. There is much good that remains unrewarded, and there is much evil that goes unpunished; and how shall every man get all his deserts in this life?

Not long ago a man murdered a whole family, in cold blood, for the sake of a little money that had been taken at a toll gate; and when the whole neighborhood was aroused, and he was pursued, and found that he was going to be captured, he shot his brains out. Now where could that murderer get his retribution, for the slaughter of a whole family, with suicide immediately after? He could not have received his punishment *before* his crime; and if he does not get it in the world to come, there is something wrong and out of gear with this moral Universe.

## Spiritual Verdicts

The moment we take such difficulties and perplexities to the Word of God for solution, we learn to interpret the silence of God now in this age, by the speech of God then in the coming crisis; the apparent inaction of God now, by the tremendous action—the adjustment at the final Bar of God. And he who flings himself against the doctrine of Divine Judgment rushes on the bosses of Jehovah's buckler, and will be torn to pieces in the conflict with the Almighty and Just One.

Then there is a Bible doctrine of the *two spheres*; Matter and Spirit, to which reference has already been made. Is there anything more rational, sensible, in accordance with experience? Look at another man. What do you see? You do not see the man, *himself*. There is not an eye so penetrating in this world that it sees the real man—but only the tabernacle that he inhabits. You see the *form* which is visible, but the *force* is invisible. What is it that talks to you? Not the mouth and lips, but something that guides the mouth and lips. *That* something you never saw, for it is evasive, spiritual, invisible. What nonsense to talk about man as though there were nothing in him but an *organism of matter*, so that, when that material organism is dissolved and disappears, there is nothing more left of the man!

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

You have heard a harper play upon a harp? You can distinguish between the harp and the harper, between the hand and the harmony. Before the harp was framed and when the harp is shattered, the harper still exists. The hand that plays it may be paralysed, but the harper himself still survives, and even the harmony that has been set in motion by him is still echoed in ever widening vibrations of ether, and these ethereal pulses will never cease while the Universe lasts!

The Word of God tells us that all our faculties are but as the harp, and we the harpers, and that what is produced by the contact of the harper with the harp is the harmony. Compare this sublime conception with the infidel materialistic theory—that man is “only a gill of water, enclosed in a glass phial; and death is the breaking of the glass phial and nobody knows what becomes of the contents!” He who prefers such a philosophy of life and death to that found in the Word of God shows himself a fool. “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God Who gave it.” I must confess I prefer such a creed to the morbid cant of the infidel.

Look at the Bible doctrine of Salvation. Two

## Spiritual Verdicts

things,—sin's penalty borne; sin's power broken! And where is there a Christlike man or woman that cannot say "I know both of these things to be true"? You have known what it was to be bowed down under a burden of conscious guilt and unforgiven sin, and you know what it is to look up and be thankful, and bless Almighty God for the peace that passes understanding, the peace of a forgiven and cleansed soul. Many know even more than this,—what it is to experience that marvellous transformation of inward character which is the basis of transformation of outward conduct, so that the things that they once did they no longer do, and the things that they once loved they now hate, and the things that they hated they now love. That renewal of the spirit of the mind has come to many, which is the greatest experience that any man or woman undergoes in this world—the transfiguration of character.

This is that miracle of a transformed life, which God calls in Isaiah LV His "everlasting sign." Other signs may cease, but this is God's "everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." "Instead of the thorn, comes up the fir tree, instead of the brier comes up the myrtle tree." Instead of damaging and noxious and hurtful growths in

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

the human soul and in society, in regenerate men and women, sprout up where grew the signs of the curse—thorns and briars—trees of Godliness, which call attention to themselves as “the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified.” How blessed are those evidences of life to every true preacher of the gospel and Christian worker that has come into contact with saved souls!

Some years since, a man came to beseech me to go and get his wife to continue to live with him. She had said she would go home to her father's house. He had been drinking, and was yet but half sober.

“Why don't you give up this infernal drink?”

“I cannot do it.”

“Have you tried?”

“Yes.”

“How long?”

“For many years.”

“Have you no hope of succeeding?”

“No.”

“I am afraid you do not know my Master. When you get into trouble, it drives you to drink; but when trouble comes upon me, it drives me to prayer, and there is a great difference. If you will get down on your knees and confess to the Lord, and simply cast yourself upon His Almighty

## Spiritual Verdicts

power, He will take even that craving away."

Almost the last thing, when I left the city, he came to me, and said: "My wife would not leave me for all the world, and I have had no desire for drink since that day." He was a saved man, and his was a transformed life.

What merely human resolve on the part of a man, and what combination of reformatory influences on the part of society, can bring forth fruit such as that? It cannot be done; and it is the everlasting sign of God, that He is a mighty God, and an Everlasting Saviour, and if men will trust themselves to His power, He will show what He can do for them.

Take the Bible doctrine of *prayer*. What is it? That, when I cry to my Father in the name of Jesus Christ for things that are agreeable to His will, and for my best well-being, I shall have what I ask for. It may be a very difficult truth to demonstrate from the *argumentative* side, but from the *experimental* it is easy; for the simple fact is that prayer *does effect positive results*. There is a positive power in prayer. John Wesley and his fellow students in Lincoln College formed their little "Holy Club," and the prayers that were offered in Lincoln College have transformed the face of the world to-day,—the stream of history

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

has flowed in different channels from those which it would have followed if that little company had not known what it is to pray. Jonathan Edwards, feeling that religion was well-nigh dying in America, sent out that great trumpet call to the whole habitable globe, and to the disciples of God everywhere, to unite in prayer for a remarkable and visible effusion of the Holy Ghost. That pamphlet came over to England, got into William Carey's hands, was republished in Northampton in 1784, and was the ultimate means of the organization of the Baptist Missionary Society, and the birth of foreign missions in these latter times; and thus great crises of the church, from that time to this, hung on the prayers of Wesley and Edwards.

In 1886, Minnesota and Dakota had been so long devastated by the "locust" or grasshopper, that those vast wheat fields—the granary of the world—were in danger of absolutely coming to nought, and the people were in distressing suspense and fear of famine. The Christian Governor of Minnesota ordered and decreed a day of fasting and prayer, and recommended all the people to come together in their various places of worship to beseech God to annihilate this grasshopper pest. The secular papers, and even some of the religious papers, ridiculed it, "As though God were going

## Spiritual Verdicts

to interfere with the order of natural law just to save these wheat fields!" Nevertheless, the Governor persisted, and the day of prayer was held. In the spring, with the wheat, appeared the locusts also, and excited new sneers and satires: "You see that your prayers, after all, did not move the arm of the great God to interpose." But now notice. No sooner had the locusts appeared than there appeared also, fastening to the bodies of those locusts, a *parasite* that in the first place destroyed their power to propagate their species, and in the second place prevented them from doing further damage; and there has not been a grasshopper in Minnesota from that day until now, as many attest who have been in those wheat fields since the pest disappeared.

Look at George Müller's orphanages and other benevolent work. No greater honour was ever given to the writer than to prepare the biography of this remarkable man. There are now about two thousand orphans and their helpers in those homes, and for some seventy years this work has gone forward; yet never an appeal to a man or woman throughout the world for a penny of help; and never a necessity of going without a meal because there was not sufficient provision for those orphans. And thousands of times George

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Muller went to bed at night without enough in the house to feed that great family in the morning, and never but twice in the whole of that time was a meal postponed, and then only for a half hour at a time! and there this monument stands,—the monument of an ever-present Helper. It has been suggested to some infidels who scoff at prayer, that there is a field for their experiments. Let some of them undertake to erect five massive buildings for orphans anywhere in the world without an appeal to any human being.

When a statesman in America, who was inclined to apologise for the slavery of the South, said to an escaped slave: "Why, it seems to me you are a fool. You were better off in slavery than you are in freedom," he replied: "Well, Sir, the situation is open to you!" It was observed the statesman did not enter it.

 The writer has in his possession a letter from the President of the United States; having had occasion at one time to communicate with him privately, he returned his very courteous and gentlemanly answer. I did not see the way my letter went to him; I did not see the way his letter came to me. How do I know that he ever received my letter, and how do I know that this reply is his? Because there is a coincidence

## Spiritual Verdicts

as to the subject of my letter, as to the time when it was written, as to the purpose for which it was written. The date of his letter is exactly the date when he would have received mine and answered it, and the place from which it was dated is the place where he was at the time.

How do I know that God hears prayer? I send up a request to God. I do not know how it gets to Him, but some answer comes back to me. I do not know how it comes, but the coincidence between my message and the answer, the time of my message and the time of the answer, the subject of my message and the substance of my answer, make me as sure that I have communicated with God, as this letter, that I have communicated with President Roosevelt.

During the transmission of a wireless message from the Campania to the shore of America, in 1903, I heard the message sent forth from the Marconi Tower. The operator said: "Now you must be very quiet," and we almost hushed our breathing, and presently we heard something that was almost inaudible. He attached the intensifier to the receiver, and in a few moments we had the message written out on the paper ribbon. I felt very solemn, as I stood in the presence of the greatest illustration of the wireless

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

telegraphy of prayer that I have ever had in my life.

Have you ever tried this wireless telegraphy by which you communicate with the throne of God? If you have not, one of the greatest privileges and one of the most august of all the delights of the sons of men you have never yet tasted. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him."

Before closing this chapter, let us venture a little into the testimony even of science to the Word of God, and call attention to one or two things.

It has been said by some of those wise pseudocritics about whom our friend, Sir Robert Anderson, is laying us under obligation by exposing their fallacious conclusions,—"It is unhistorical to represent Hiram of Tyre as helping Solomon build the Temple, for it is well known that Tyre and Judea had no friendly contact in those days." A few years ago the Palestine Exploration Society, sinking a perpendicular shaft at the corner of the wall of Jerusalem, were surprised to find on the face of those huge foundation stones some mysterious characters in crimson paint. They

## Spiritual Verdicts

took exact copies of a few of them, and sent them to a score of learned men of Europe, who gave the opinion that they were the *marks of Tyrian workmen*, having reference to stones in a quarry. It is very remarkable. See what pains the Lord takes to make certain to us that His Word is true. The drippings from the brushes were in this case *above* the characters instead of *below*, which shows that those characters were painted on the stone while in the quarry; and that, when they were brought to the building site, those who had to put them in place, not understanding the characters, accidentally got them *upside down*,—for no one will find it easy to make the drippings from a paint brush go up instead of down.

There are prophecies about the world's being destroyed by fire, in II Peter III. Scientific facts, not known in Peter's day, make all that possible. This atmosphere that encompasses the earth, perhaps a hundred miles high, is composed of nitrogen, four-fifths, and oxygen, one-fifth, and the nitrogen is "the lazy giant," holding the oxygen in check. These waters are composed of oxygen and hydrogen in about equal quantities. God has only to separate the oxygen and the hydrogen in the water, and to neutralise the effect

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

of the nitrogen in the atmosphere, and there would be a conflagration that would wrap this earth in flame, that would melt the hardest rocks and the toughest metals with incredible rapidity. Thus scientific facts, founded on modern chemical analysis, and unknown in the day when Peter wrote his second Epistle, remarkably bear out the predictions of the Word of God.

On one occasion, the infidel, Ingersoll, was to lecture on the "Foundations of the Christian Faith." There was living, in the same city, a former schoolmate who had started upon the legal profession with great promise, wedded a lovely woman, and was the father of two children. Drink had dragged him down so low that it broke up his home, broke the heart of his wife, sent his children into the street, and lost him his good name, character and friends.

He was found, one night, lying drunk in an alley, taken to a home, washed, fed and put to bed, by a Christian worker in the slums, who then besought him to change his course. Lifting his hand to heaven, he vowed that, with God's help, he would never again touch drink. God's grace transformed him into a sober and Christian man. He rebuilt his shattered home, brought back his children from the streets, restored the roses to his

## Spiritual Verdicts

wife's cheeks, and attained again to respectability in his calling. Reading in the newspapers the notice of Ingersoll's lecture, he wrote him:

"My Dear Old Friend:

"I see that to-night you are to deliver a lecture against Christianity and the Bible. Perhaps you know some of my history since we parted, how I disgraced my home and family, lost my character, and all that a man can hold dear in this world. You may know that I went down and down until I was a poor despised outcast, and when I thought there was none to help and none to save, there came one in the name of Jesus, who told me of His power to help, of His loving kindness and His tender sympathy, and through the story of the cross of Christ I turned to Him. I brought my wife back to my home and gathered my children together again, and we are happy now and I am doing what good I can.

"And now, old friend, would you stand to-night before the people of Pittsburg, and tell them what you have to say against the religion that will come down to the lowest depths of hell and find me and help me up and make my life happy and clothe my children and give me back my home and friends, will you tell them what you have to say against a religion like that?"

Mr. Ingersoll read that letter before his audience, and he said: "Ladies and Gentlemen, I have nothing to say against a religion that will do this

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

for a man. I am here to talk about a religion that is being preached by the preachers. You can find fault with the church, but there stands one, supreme, and no man has ever dared to point his finger at the character of Christ and find any fault with Him."

For once in his life Robert Ingersoll had, in a way, to confess Christ; and this incident reminds one how Peter Mackenzie, the Cornish miner, when he was going through Madame Tussaud's gallery, and saw the chair of Voltaire, in a moment leaped over the railing, and sitting down there began to sing:

Jesus shall reign where e'er the sun  
Doth his successive journeys run;  
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

## CHAPTER XII

### SPIRITUAL VERITIES

LET us now gather together some of the threads of thought which have on previous occasions been merely touched on, and, in a sense, give completeness to the impressions which may already have been produced. The Word of God has a divine mission in this world; and, first of all, its mission is to proclaim to men the unchangeable verities of God. They are in everlasting contrast to the vanities of this world and even of so-called wise men. Those who have known this book, and have found it in personal experience a lamp to their feet and a light to their path can say with confidence, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables."

There are many "fables" in this world, and not a few scholars who like the late Principal Dawson venture to say that one of these fables, imposed on the human race, is the theory of *Evolution*. Notwithstanding the arrogance of scientific men—so-called—what has been the "profound conviction" of some who have been called "authorities" has

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

afterwards been seen to be a pure figment of human folly and fancy.

What is the substance of Evolution? That everything can be traced to a primitive germ, and has developed or evolved from it. That all the forms, possibilities and potencies of life are contained in matter, and that they need only time to develop into all the varieties of form, colour, function and faculty that we see about us in this wonderful Universe of God. The trouble with this doctrine is that, carried to its logical conclusion, it lands us in Atheism; that it makes matter self-existent and eternal, and banishes the Creator from His Universe. There are modified forms of evolutionary philosophy that Christian scholars claim that they can hold in perfect consistency with the faith in a personal creative intelligence. For the present we refer to the system, as a whole, and particularly to its bearing upon spiritual truth, its relation to the verities of the Word of God.

This great fable includes other fables. For instance, a fable about *Creation*. It makes matter self-existent and eternal, and one of the remarkable features about it is its denial of the whole argument from design, upon which Paley, Butler and others base their great systems of evidence.

## Spiritual Verities

One of the most curiously incredible positions of Evolution is, that all the marvellous adaptations that we find in plant life, animal life and human life are the result of two things: First, of a desire for some new organ or function; and second, of habits which tend to cultivate or develop some new organ. Dr. Mark Hopkins, one of the finest men that America ever produced, called attention to the fact that in Darwin's "Origin of Species,"\* he says:

"In North America, the black bear was seen by Hearne, swimming for hours with widely open mouth, thus catching, like a whale, insects in the water. Even in so extreme a case as this, if the supply of insects were constant, and if better adapted competitors did not already exist in the country, I can see no difficulty in a race of bears being rendered, by natural selection, more and more aquatic in their structure and habits, with larger and larger mouths, till a creature was produced as monstrous as a whale."

In the later editions this sentence seems to have been eliminated. Perhaps Mr. Darwin found it aroused too severe criticism.

But the main difficulty about evolution is that it has passed the bounds of mere science, and invaded the sphere of Christian truth. It has made not only Creation, but *man himself*, to be

\* American edition, 1870, p. 165.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

a product of evolution. Your mother is a monkey,—more remotely a codfish,—more remotely still, an oyster, and beyond that a monad or mite; electricity working on dead gelatinous matter, and so starting all the mysteries of life, by a kind of spontaneous generation.

Evolution makes the *Bible* nothing but a product of “natural selection,” only in the course of development,—the best book so far, but by no means the final word upon moral issues or spiritual themes. In this case we have in it no final court of appeal for doctrine or duty. Any book on the way to the final perfect Book will be liable to errors and imperfections and defects, according to the evolutionary theory, and all infallibility in its teaching becomes of course impossible.

The same teaching makes *Christ* only a product of evolution,—the best of men so far, but not the final product. The human race is working on towards its last and greatest and most perfect consummation of manhood.

One does not see how a Christian can consistently believe such doctrine. And yet we are amazed to find many Christian men, and even ministers and professors of theology, holding such views.

Few understand the extent to which dangerous doctrine drawn from infidel sources is pervad-

## Spiritual Verities

ing even Christian teaching. Rev. Dr. Howard Osgood, of Rochester, one of the Committee of Revision in America, and fully the peer of any other of his fellow revisers, was present at a meeting where "Higher Critics" were ventilating their rationalistic views. He heard them as patiently as possible, and the next morning he arose in the assembly and said: "I wish to ask these representatives of so-called critical opinion to listen to two extracts which I am going to read. He read them.

"Now," he said, "I would like to ask whether they consider these extracts properly and fairly to represent the position of the Higher Critics," and the question being put to them one by one, they assented.

"Very well," he said, "all I have to add is, that the first of those two extracts is from 'Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary,' and the second form is Tom Paine's 'Age of Reason'!"

My friend Rev. Dr. Campbell Morgan told me that, when preaching in Chicago, he was asked to attend a ministers' meeting, where a paper on "The Results of Higher Criticism" was read by a theological professor. He attended, and being asked his opinion, remarked there was no time to discuss the contents of the paper, but he would like to ask the author in a few words what he

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

regarded the latest and most established result of Higher Criticism, and he gave such as these:

- (1) That Moses did not write the Pentateuch.
- (2) That the whole system known as Levitical, with the priesthood and the Tabernacle, did not exist until after the exile.
- (3) That David did not write the Psalms.
- (4) That the Lord Jesus Christ set His sanction upon current and popular error.

Dr. Morgan was very much shocked, and he said: "I would like to ask one more question. Do you believe that on such subjects Professor George Adam Smith, of Glasgow, for instance, knows more than the Lord Jesus Christ knew?" "Yes," he said, "he does, because he has access to sources of information to which the Lord Jesus Christ did not have access!" And this is the kind of teaching to which young men in theological seminaries are subjected, and then are expected to come out and preach the glorious gospel!

While avoiding controversial words, one cannot deliver his conscience from the solemn responsibility of warning young men, especially, against dabbling with the literature of rationalistic criticism, and then expecting their faith to survive. All such let me urge to read the Bible, and on their knees in prayer seek of God illumination, and then

## Spiritual Verities

translate its truths into holy living; and let all such practically infidel teaching, by whatever name it is christened, or by whatever authority sanctioned, severely alone. Some may like the Agnostics' creed; I prefer the Apostles' creed.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

And let all the people say "Amen."

Not only does the Bible come to us to proclaim the verities of God, but the verities are self-evidencing. You have only to put the doctrines of infidels and agnostics and sceptics and rationalistic critics over against the doctrines of the Word of God, to see that the stamp of error is on the former, and the stamp of truth on the latter.

Think of the doctrine of the Word of God:—That there is an infinite personal God, the Foun-

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

tain of all intelligence, of all conscience, of all spiritual life; the Creator of man and of the Universe, the providential Ruler of all history, and the final Judge of all intelligent being; that creation is His handiwork, and that all the adaptations of the Universe are marks of His designing mind and constructive hand;

That man is made in the image of God; that sin has defaced that image, but has not effaced it; that man is more than a mere animal,—that, while the animals have a body and an animal soul, man has something more than both, he has *spirit*, which no animal has, and which links him particularly with a spiritual God, so that the lowest man is infinitely above the highest animal in his capacities and powers and possibilities of development.

In New York City, in Dr. Richard's Retreat, there was a little half idiotic boy, known as the "oyster boy," because he seemed to be living the life of a bivalve,—no intelligence, nothing but the exercise of animal functions; and it seemed, at first, impossible to awaken that boy to any consciousness of intellectual or spiritual things. One day Mrs. Richards dropped her thimble, and as it rang on the wooden floor, he turned quickly about, as he was lying there, his tongue lolling

## Spiritual Verities

out; and Dr. Richards said: "That is the first sign of intelligence. Do not drop that again, it is too much for that awakening mind." Through the sense of hearing, and especially through the sense of musical sounds, that "oyster boy" began to develop, and the first thing that Dr. Richards sought to impress upon him was the connection between cause and effect. He brought in a shoemaker, with his tools, and a shoe was made before him, and he was taught to say: "Shoemaker makes shoe." Then a tailor made before him a suit of clothes. "Tailor makes clothes." And so he was led on, step by step, until one day his Christian instructor took him into the bay window of the dining-room, as the sun was mounting upward in the heaven; and, pointing to the sun, he said: "*God made the sun.*" He could not easily get that boy away from the window. Two hours afterwards he came there, and found him still standing in rapt fascination, with uplifted hands, reverently saying: "*God made sun!*" By and bye that "oyster boy" had developed so far, under this Christian teaching, that when the Bishop of New York came in and heard him recite the Lord's Prayer, he said: "I have said that thousands of times, but I have never said it, or heard it said, with the intelligence, appreciation and emotion

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

with which it has been uttered by that boy." Who could educate a dog or a horse in any such fashion as that? Is not the lowest man far higher in the scale of being than the highest animal, having capacities of development that cannot be measured? That is the Bible doctrine as to man.

And, as to the Word of God, it has the seal of God upon it,—the seal of His omniscience in prophecy, His omnipotence in miracle, His omnipresence in its unity, His providence in its history, His truth in its accuracy, His righteousness and holiness in its morality and spirituality, and His love in its benevolent mission and power. There never was another book like it, and from beginning to end it has upon it the stamp of its Author.

The Bible teaches us that Christ was the Son of God, becoming the Son of Man,—perfect God and perfect man; that the object of His incarnation was that He might bring God down to man, and then lift up man toward God, and that Salvation, as wrought out by Him, is an ellipse with two foci,—the first advent and the second advent, having a marked relation to each other, and jointly to all events in the history of human Redemption.

The Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit, the

## Spiritual Verities

third Person of the blessed Trinity, is the Source of all life, but preeminently the Source of spiritual life; and that there is no regeneration without Him, and that there is no sanctification without Him.

And if you will put this sublime system of Christian teaching over against the absurdities of infidelity and the fables of evolution, you will conclude that, if this is not the truth it ought to be, and that if they are not errors they strangely resemble them.

But the Bible comes to challenge us to a reasonable faith and an experimental knowledge. It does not ask us to accept blindly what other people have believed, or what our parents have taught us, but to examine for ourselves and get a reasonable basis for our faith. The Bible teaches us that the most rational explanation of the Universe, of the Bible, and of the Christ, is the explanation which the Word of God itself gives.

There is one fact about the Bible which of itself is enough to prove that it is a Divine Book, and that is its prophetic forecast. That prophetic forecast has already been treated very fully in a previous series of addresses,\* but as yet we have touched only on the fringe of the garment of this theme. There are hundreds of prophecies in the Old Testament alone, all of which—save

\**Living Oracles of God, 1904.*

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

those that pertain to times yet future—have, as we have seen, already been fulfilled, and are fulfilling before our very eyes; these prophecies pervade all the books of the Old Testament, embracing not only direct prediction, but indirect prediction, such as rites and ceremonies, historic events, historic personages, and even the precepts of the Law; all these having a forecast of a prophetic character. God has thus permeated the Bible with His life, and this is only one of the evidences and examples of this permeating life.

As to the Son of God,—there is one all-convincing Fact: He stands forth, ever the *unequalled and incomparable Being*. There has never been another like Him on the face of the earth.

When Gilbert West and Lord Lyttleton, about the middle of the eighteenth century, planned an attack on the Christian religion, and then met to consider the defences of the faith, that they might know the pregnable points of attack, they made up their minds that they must examine the New Testament with care. They gave months to this study, and when they met again, were both converted men. Those who were to have assaulted the Book now defended it. Let us again remind ourselves what arguments they found in the Word of God? Mainly two: The resurrection of Christ and

## Spiritual Verities

the conversion of Saul. They found the resurrection to be as well supported as a historic event as any other event of history, and the resurrection of Christ carried every other miracle with it! All other miracles became possible when the greatest of all miracles became credible.

And, as to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, they saw that there was no possibility of accounting for this sudden and remarkable change in a man who had even his own conscience with him in his methods of persecution, and who had lived blamelessly as a Pharisee, and therefore had no special ground for conscientious accusation as to an outwardly wicked life, except the reason that he himself gave,—that he had seen the risen Christ in the way. One of these men has left us a monograph on the Resurrection of Christ, and the other a companion treatise on the Conversion of the Apostle Paul.

The Bible challenges the reader to an *experimental* knowledge. It tells him that if he will search the scriptures, he will find that they contain the testimony to Jesus Christ; and he needs not read another book if he will search the Bible properly, for the Bible is its own evidence, and contains its own demonstration and verification. Jesus Christ says in forty words the

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

whole substance of the Gospel. (Mat. xi: 28-30):

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

It is a very simple thing to come and see whether we do find rest; to sit at His feet, and see whether we do learn the inward rest; to take His yoke upon us, and see whether we learn the rest that comes from companionship with Him in service. As to the power of prayer, Chalmers calls that the "portable evidence of Christianity."

Then look at the Christian's death. You remember the dying Atheist, when one of his fellow Atheists said to him: "John, hold on." "Yes," he said, "*but what shall I hold on to?*" When the millionaire of America, Cornelius Vanderbilt, was dying, he provided for the disposition of twenty million pounds sterling to his family and heirs, and then turning to his Christian wife said: "My dear, sing

" 'Come ye sinners, poor and needy,  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus ready stands to save you,  
Full of pity, love and power.' "

The millionaire had to become a beggar in the

## Spiritual Verities

dying hour, and take his place with other sinners, humbly suing for the boon of salvation.

The Bible comes to this world to uplift the whole fabric of society. That German historian that attempted to write the history of the world, and was converted by his study, left in one sentence the conclusion that he had reached,—that the hand that bled on Calvary had lifted from their hinges the gates of the ages.

Isaac Taylor tells us that there are ten social evils that have cursed the race from the very beginning of sin: (1) Polygamy, (2) Adultery, (3) Legalised impurity, (4) Capricious divorce, (5) Infanticide, (6) Capacious and offensive wars, (7) Bloody and brutal games, (8) Death and punishment by torture, (9) Caste, and (10) Slavery. And wherever this Blessed Book goes, these flee, and in proportion as it permeates the community, they retire like birds of the night before the dawning day and rising sun.

After eighteen hundred years, the power of the Cross is greater than ever, and the story of the Christ has never lost its charm. When one of the missionaries in the remote East was amidst a company of people that threatened to stone him, he said: "Just wait till I tell you a story." And he told the story of Calvary, and soon every stone

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

dropped out of the hands, and tears began to run down the faces of that antagonistic and assaulting multitude. Years ago, there was a German in Boston who had received a wound in war, and whenever he attempted to sing (being a fine musician, and especially fond of singing what was pathetic and stirred the deepest emotions), that wound would open again, and it was very difficult to staunch it. And, whenever the old story of the Cross is sung in human ears, there is a new out-gush of gratitude, and emotion and affection and resolution, and men that nothing else would touch, that no law would restrain, and no prison bars confine, yield before the mystery of the vicarious atonement.

The history of Missions furnishes many a stimulating illustration. In 1875 Stanley wrote, on the 15th November (the letter was published in the "Daily Telegraph"), about Mtesa in Uganda asking for Christian teachers, and straightway Christian teachers went to Uganda; and Alexander Mackay, the beloved Scotch engineer, went out, and as soon as he got a smattering of the language, he knew that the one thing to do for the Baganda was to give them the precious Word of God. He printed the Lord's Prayer, the ten commandments, and a few verses of holy scripture, and that was

## Spiritual Verities

the foundation of the civilisation of Uganda. Presently persecution came, and Sembari, who was one of the first converts, and who wrote that charming letter to Mackay in which he said: "I have great news to communicate to you,—I want to be baptised," led the way in a host of converts, thirty of whom were burned on one funeral pyre; but they could not stop the work, because it was based on the Word of God. And the original Bible of Uganda (known as the "biscuit tin Bible," because it is the size and shape of one of Huntley & Palmer's biscuit tins, so that it could be placed inside of the tin case, and kept from the white ants that are so destructive), that became the corner-stone of the new Uganda. We all know about the "Readers" of Uganda, and the Reading Houses that have been put up by the hundred, and the thousands of people in Uganda that have gathered simply to read the precious Book of God; and this most wonderful story of transformation, found in all the centuries, may all be explained by the living Word of the living God.

Incarnate the Bible in your life. The difference between a sane man and an insane man is this,—the insane man accepts fancies as facts, and acts accordingly, but the sane man accepts facts, and rejects the fancies, and acts accordingly.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

If you would be spiritually sane, accept the fact that this is the Book of God, and that Christ is the Son of God, and that the Spirit is the regenerating Power of God, and act accordingly.

We may safely trust experiment. The power to mould spiritual consciousness is one of the greatest powers of the Holy Ghost, and there is nothing in the Universe that is mightier than moral conviction, grounded and established upon experiment. Let us distrust all arguments that contradict our own experience. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, no man can take away that confidence from us.

In the great crisis of American history, when the liberty of the slave was the engrossing topic, Wendell Phillips said on one occasion: "You may build your capitol of granite, and grout it with iron; the pulses of a girl's heart will wear it down, —only give her time enough."

So, of all the fabrics of scepticism and philosophy, you may buttress them up by scholarship and learning, and the claims of so-called great men, but the pulses of a believer's heart will wear them down, for they cannot survive the testimony of one who "knows Whom he has believed, and is persuaded that He is able to keep that which he has committed unto Him against that day."

## Spiritual Verities

And it is because the Bible can be incarnated in human experience that it is indestructible. It is woven into the woof and warp of society, it is braided into the fabric of conviction and affection and resolution and conscience.

Hawthorne, in his amusing pen picture of "The Holocaust," represents men as being taken with the mad passion to burn everything up, so that all the trappings of the vain and of the gay go into the bonfire; and then he saw the passion for burning madly triumph, until, by and bye, poetry, and fiction, and philosophy, and all literature was heaped on the fire, and at last the Bible itself was put into the flame; but Hawthorne says that, although he observed that even commentaries were very inflammable, and that where there had been glosses on the holy page itself they were burned up, not one single word or letter of the book itself could be consumed.

Libanius, the sceptic, said to the earliest Christians: "What is your Carpenter doing now?" And one of the humblest preachers of that day said: "Making a coffin." A little while after, the Emperor Julian died, who was the idol of Libanius, and the early Christians thought that the answer that was given to Libanius was prophetic of Julian's death.

## The Bible and Spiritual Criticism

Jesus Christ *is* "making a coffin," and into that coffin will go all the false systems of faith, and philosophy, and idolatry, and iniquity that the world has ever known; and they will have an everlasting burial.

We remember many facts about this precious Book, and here we record one of them. When the revised New Testament was completed and announced as for sale, 2,250,000 copies were ordered or bought within forty-eight hours, and the entire Revised New Testament was cabled across three thousand miles of the Atlantic, and appeared the next day in the columns of the "Chicago Tribune"!

The Bible is not a worn-out Book yet. The Statue of Liberty in the Harbour of New York, lifts its great light for the guidance of mariners, and, though the birds of the night fling themselves madly against its crystal, as if to put out its flame, they only beat themselves into insensibility, and fall dead at its base; so, whatever antagonism there may be to this, God's Beacon Light, those who assault it will only damage themselves, while the light shines on, safe and serene!

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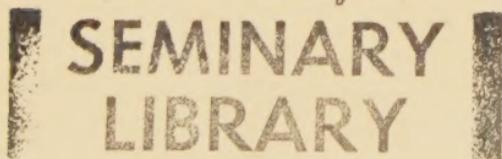
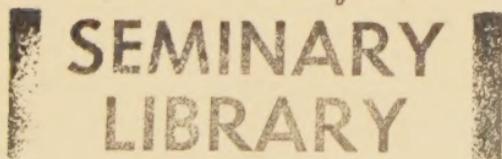






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